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THE LIFE AND LETTERS
OF
GEORGE GORDON MEADE

VOLUME II

PART V

NARRATIVE OF THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

I

THE MARCH TO GETTYSBURG

ON the afternoon of the same day on which this last letter was written, June 25, General Meade received the order of march for the following day, which was to bring his corps to Frederick City, Maryland. Accordingly, early in the morning of June 26, the corps started *en route* for that place, and going by way of Carter's Mill ¹ and Leesburg, crossed the Potomac at the upper pontoon bridge, at Edwards's Ferry, and proceeded to within four miles of the Monocacy, where it encamped for the night. Resuming its march, early on the 27th, it forded the Monocacy near its mouth, and arrived toward afternoon at Ballinger's Creek, just outside of Frederick City.

After making proper dispositions for the encampment of the corps, General Meade rode into Frederick City with one or two of his staff, hoping to meet there General Hooker, whom he had not seen since breaking camp near Banks's Ford, on the Rappahannock, on the 13th of June, and to gain some information as to the plans and supposed whereabouts of the enemy; in which hope he was disappointed, General Hooker not having yet arrived.

Returned to camp, ignorant of a great change which had been decided upon and impended over him and the army, General Meade lay quietly asleep in his tent at three o'clock of the morning of June 28, when he was aroused by hearing on the outside an inquiry for his tent, by a person who claimed to be the bearer of important despatches to him. This proved to be Colonel James A. Hardie, of General Halleck's staff, who entered General Meade's tent and executed his mission.

What this mission might have been was the occasion of agitated comment among several of General Meade's aides, who, their tents

¹ Not shown on map.

being in the immediate vicinity, were awakened by the stir in camp at that hour. That it had been executed in the dead of night, by an officer direct from the general-in-chief at the War Department, proved it to be of the last importance; but that was the only thing evident. What it portended, whether good or ill, to their general, no one could pretend to say. Enough, however, of the misunderstandings and difficulties with which he lately had had to contend was known to that little band to make some apprehensive that all was not well. The details of the interview between General Meade and Colonel Hardie will be left for the general himself to relate in the next letter to his wife.

General Meade soon appeared from his tent, and designating one of his aides as the only officer, besides Colonel Hardie, to accompany him, just as the day was faintly dawning he mounted and set out with his two companions for the head-quarters of the army. The little party rode silently along, the conversation almost restricted to a few questions asked by General Meade, who seemed deeply absorbed in his own thoughts, until, head-quarters being reached just after daylight, he was ushered into the tent of General Hooker, who was apparently ready to receive him. The interview between Generals Hooker and Meade lasted for some time, when the latter issued from the tent and called to his aide, who had been patiently waiting outside, still uninformed as to what was taking place, but with a vague impression that the fate of his general was not to be that predicted by his brother aides-de-camp. Although, as he answered the general's summons, he could not fail to observe that the general continued very grave, he also perceived a familiar twinkle of the eye, denoting the anticipation of surprise at information to be imparted, the effect of which he was curious to see; and so, when he at last quietly said, "Well, George, I am in command of the Army of the Potomac," his hearer was not, after all, very much surprised.

Giving immediate directions for his other aides-de-camp to join him at head-quarters, and for having personal effects brought over from the head-quarters of the Fifth Corps, the general retired into one of the tents, and in his consummate manner, in which all his powers were at his disposal at a moment's notice, at once bent his mind and energies to the task before him. The magnitude of this task may be faintly imagined but cannot be realized. It must be remembered that a change of commanders had been made in an army, not when, the preliminary manoeuvres having been executed, it awaited or was engaged in battle, where, in either case, a change

of commanders is an ordinary incident of war, but that the change had been made in an army on the march, with its corps necessarily distributed over a great extent of territory, advancing to intercept and concentrate against an army of supposably equal or superior numbers, the whereabouts of which was not accurately known, led by the ablest general of the enemy.

General Hooker, at the interview which had taken place between him and his successor, relieved it of all embarrassment by the extreme courtesy of his demeanor, expressing his gratification at the choice which had been made for his successor. General Meade responded in the same spirit, and assured General Hooker that the selection had been made without any action or even knowledge on his part; that it was against his personal inclinations; but that, as a soldier, subject to authority, he felt bound to obey orders.

Within a few hours after being relieved of the command of the army, General Hooker took his departure for Baltimore, the post designated in his orders. General Meade received no intimation from him of any plan that he had formed, or of any views that he held, and therefore naturally presumed that he had had no definite plans, but that he had been, up to that moment, as he himself was subsequently obliged to be, governed by developments.

It seems that the final disagreement between General Hooker and the general-in-chief, General Halleck, was with reference to the post and garrison of Harper's Ferry. General Hooker had visited Harper's Ferry on the 27th, and thence addressed a recommendation to General Halleck to abandon the post and order the garrison to join the Army of the Potomac. General Halleck declined to consent to this, and General Hooker, in consequence of this action, feeling aggrieved, requested to be relieved from the command of the army. His request being complied with, soon after the arrival of General Meade he bade farewell to the army in a general order.

With the order placing General Meade in command of the Army of the Potomac came the following letter from General Halleck:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 27, 1863.*

MAJOR GENERAL G. G. MEADE,

Army of the Potomac.

GENERAL:

You will receive with this the order of the President placing you in command of the Army of the Potomac. Considering the circumstances, no one ever received a more important command; and I

cannot doubt that you will fully justify the confidence which the Government has reposed in you.

You will not be hampered by any minute instructions from these headquarters. Your army is free to act as you may deem proper under the circumstances as they arise. You will, however, keep in view the important fact that the Army of the Potomac is the covering army of Washington, as well as the army of operation against the invading forces of the rebels. You will therefore manoeuvre and fight in such a manner as to cover the Capital and also Baltimore, as far as circumstances will admit. Should General Lee move upon either of these places, it is expected that you will either anticipate him or arrive with him, so as to give him battle.

All forces within the sphere of your operations will be held subject to your orders.

Harper's Ferry and its garrison are under your direct orders.

You are authorized to remove from command and send from your army any officer or other person you may deem proper; and to appoint to command as you may deem expedient.

In fine, General, you are intrusted with all the power and authority which the President, the Secretary of War, or the General-in-Chief can confer on you, and you may rely on our full support.

You will keep me fully informed of all your movements and the positions of your own troops and those of the enemy, so far as known.

I shall always be ready to advise and assist you to the utmost of my ability.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

H. W. HALLECK,

General-in-Chief.

Soon after his interview with General Hooker, General Meade telegraphed to the general-in-chief as follows:

FREDERICK, MD., 7 A. M., June 28, 1863.

H. W. HALLECK,

General-in-Chief:

The order placing me in command of this army is received. As a soldier I obey it, and to the utmost of my ability will execute it. Totally unexpected as it has been, and in ignorance of the exact condition of the troops and position of the enemy, I can only now say

that it appears to me I must move towards the Susquehanna, keeping Washington and Baltimore well covered, and if the enemy is checked in his attempt to cross the Susquehanna, or if he turns towards Baltimore, to give him battle. I would say that I trust that every available man that can be spared will be sent to me, as, from all accounts, the enemy is in strong force. So soon as I can post myself up I will communicate more in detail.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major General.

The general then at once issued his order assuming the command of the army.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 28, 1863.*

General Orders, No. 67.

By direction of the President of the United States, I hereby assume command of the Army of the Potomac.

As a soldier, in obeying this order—an order totally unexpected and unsolicited—I have no promises or pledges to make.

The country looks to this army to relieve it from the devastation and disgrace of a foreign invasion. Whatever fatigues and sacrifices we may be called upon to undergo, let us have in view, constantly, the magnitude of the interests involved, and let each man determine to do his duty, leaving to an all-controlling Providence the decision of the contest.

It is with great diffidence that I relieve in the command of this army an eminent and accomplished soldier, whose name must ever appear conspicuous in the history of its achievements; but I rely upon the hearty support of my companions in arms to assist me in the discharge of the duties of the important trust which has been confided to me.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major General, commanding.

It would be well for the reader here briefly to review in sequence the events which had taken place, in which he cannot fail to see the cumulative causes which had led at last to the selection of General Meade for the command of the Army of the Potomac at this critical juncture.

Going back to the Peninsular campaign, we have seen him as a

brigade commander rendering efficient service, and falling wounded in the last of the Seven-Days' Battles, amidst the hottest of the fighting. We have seen him at the Second Battle of Bull Run, again as brigade commander, stemming the tide of defeat, and afterwards receiving the thanks of the commanding general. We have seen him at the head of his division storm the heights at South Mountain and gain the plaudits of the army, so exciting the admiration of his corps commander as to make him exclaim: "Look at Meade! Why, with troops like those, led in that way, I can whip anything!" We have seen him at Antietam, at a most critical moment of the battle, selected in preference to superiors in rank, by the commanding general of the army, to replace his wounded corps commander. We have seen him at Fredericksburg selected, with his division, to make an assault, for the reason that "the Army of the Potomac had no braver soldier or better officer than General Meade to lead his division to the attack." And, finally, we have seen him at Chancellorsville, the main reliance of the commanding general at a most disastrous moment of that most disastrous field.

We have gleaned from his letters of this latter period, through mention of the willingness and desire of his brother corps commanders, seniors in rank, to serve under him, knowledge of the high estimation in which he was held by them. We find it reported that that able soldier General John F. Reynolds, with whom he had long served and fought side by side, upon being offered the command of the army, declined the honor, and suggested General Meade, as the best fitted, in his estimation, for the command. And we find that the gallant soldier General John Sedgwick, when waited on after Chancellorsville, by one high in the confidence of the President, to hear his views as to the condition of the army, and to learn whether, in case a change of commanders should prove necessary, he would accept the position, declined the command, and emphatically replied, in answer to the question as to the best appointment that could be made from those serving in the army, "Why, Meade is the proper one to command this army."

It was the general recognition among the high officers of the army, through intimate association in the field in the face of the enemy, of General Meade's strict attention to duty, his constant presence with his command, quick perception, generous support at all times of his immediately superior officers, his promptness and decision in action, his firm self-reliance; it was, in a word, the general

recognition of his rare combination of dutifulness, military talent, and gallantry that led at last to its legitimate result in the almost universal sentiment among these officers of his pre-eminent fitness to command the Army of the Potomac. These were the influences, and these alone, that prompted the authorities at Washington, when the country was oppressed with dreadful uncertainty and dark foreboding as to what the next few days might bring forth, to intrust one unsupported by personal or political favor with the leadership of its last hope against an invading army, strong in numbers and flushed with success, which threatened the principal cities of the North and even the safety of the Capital itself. How grandly General Meade executed this trust, how completely he justified the sentiment of the army, how he restored bright hopes throughout the North, where before there was only deep depression, the events of the next few days will show.

The change of commanders, although made at a time which all regarded as critical, was received by the army with its usual admirable spirit. The congratulations and assurances of hearty support, tendered on all sides, were particularly gratifying to the new commander. A feeling of confidence soon pervaded the army, greatly strengthened by observation of the systematic manner in which General Meade at once set to work. The first day, the 28th of June, he devoted to gaining a knowledge of the strength and condition of the different corps, and their relative positions, and of the position and movements of the enemy; and when, on the following day, the army moved forward, the enthusiasm and determination evinced on all sides was a favorable omen of success.

The Army of the Potomac consisted at this time of seven corps of infantry, one of cavalry, and the Artillery Reserve.¹ The First Corps, commanded by Major-General John F. Reynolds, numbered 10,022 men; its position was at Middletown, Maryland. The Second Corps, commanded by Major-General Winfield Scott Hancock, numbered 12,996 men; it was on the march from Sugar Loaf Mountain, Maryland, under orders from General Hooker, to encamp at Frederick City. By orders of General Meade it was halted near Monocacy Junction, and encamped there during the night. The Third Corps, commanded by Major-General Daniel E. Sickles,² numbered 11,924 men; it was at Middletown. The Fifth Corps, lately Gen-

¹ See Map No. 1, position June 28.

² General Sickles resumed the command of the Third Corps, relieving General Birney, on the morning of the 28th of June.

eral Meade's, now commanded by Major-General George Sykes, numbered 12,509 men; it was at Frederick City, Maryland. The Sixth Corps, commanded by Major-General John Sedgwick, numbered 15,679 men; it was at Hyattstown, Maryland. The Eleventh Corps, commanded by Major-General Oliver O. Howard, numbered 9,893 men; it was, with the First and Third Corps, at Middletown. The Twelfth Corps, commanded by Major-General Henry W. Slocum, numbered 8,589 men; it arrived at 2 P. M., on the 28th, at Frederick City, from Knoxville, Maryland. The Artillery Reserve, commanded by Brigadier-General Robert O. Tyler, consisted of twenty-one batteries (108 guns) and 2,546 men; it was at Frederick City.¹ The Cavalry Corps, commanded by Brigadier-General Alfred Pleasanton, numbered 11,501 men; it was disposed on the flanks of the army.² The First Division, commanded by Brigadier-General John Buford, on the left flank, at Middletown, and the Second Division, commanded by Brigadier-General David McM. Gregg (which had been bringing up the rear of the army and covering its crossing of the Potomac), on the right flank, at various points between Frederick City and Ridgeville, on the road to Baltimore. The Third Division (formerly Stahl's), commanded by Brigadier-General Judson Kilpatrick, and lately added to the army, was at Frederick City. During the day, June 28, the First, Third, and Eleventh Corps were withdrawn from Middletown and concentrated in the neighborhood of Frederick City.

From the meagre information obtainable by General Meade, and that chiefly through the public press, he was led to believe that the Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by General Robert E. Lee, and estimated at over 100,000 men, had crossed the Potomac, passed through Hagerstown, and was marching up the Cumberland Valley. He decided to move as quickly as possible on the main line from Frederick City to Harrisburg, extending his wings as far as he could consistently with facility of rapid concentration, and to continue the movement until he either had come suddenly upon the enemy or had had reason to believe that the enemy was advancing upon him; his object, of course, being at all hazards (except uncovering Washington and Baltimore) to compel the enemy to relinquish his hold

¹ The positions of the Artillery Reserve are not shown on the maps.

² The dotted line designating the cavalry situation on the maps simply shows the general line covered by the main divisions of the cavalry. Beyond this line their pickets and patrols were scouting the country for miles in all directions.

upon the Susquehanna, and to accept battle. It was his determination, subject to the necessity of general manœuvres, to deliver battle wherever and whenever he could possibly find the enemy.

Upon inquiry of the authorities at Washington whether he would be permitted to withdraw a portion of the force under General French, at Harper's Ferry, he was informed that it was now under his orders. Previously, he had been notified that the troops of General Schenck, outside of the defences of Baltimore, were subject to his orders, as were also those of General Couch at Harrisburg. However, as on June 29, telegraphic communication was cut off by the enemy's cavalry with Baltimore and Washington, and as the distance to General Couch was too great for him to be available, no assistance was possible from either of these quarters. The cutting of telegraphic communication by the enemy's cavalry between the army and Washington, Baltimore, and other places had, although annoying in some respects, the redeeming feature of isolating the army and relieving the commanding general from the necessity of considering the usual suggestions from Washington and the thousand idle rumors which would have been brought to his attention, and of allowing him to concentrate it upon his own army, that of the enemy, and upon the main purpose in view.

During the day information was received by General Meade that a body of Confederate cavalry, the exact strength of which was not known, had crossed the Potomac at Seneca Falls, and was between his army and Washington. Two brigades of cavalry and a battery of artillery were at once despatched in search and pursuit of this force, which eventually proved to be the main body of Stuart's cavalry.

Having perfected his plans, General Meade issued to the army the order of march for the following day:¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
FREDERICK, MD., June 28, 1863.

Orders:

The army will march to-morrow as follows:

4 A. M. The 1st Corps, Major General Reynolds, by Lewistown and Mechanicstown to Emmettsburg, keeping the left of the road from Frederick to Lewistown, between J. P. Cramer's ² and where the road branches to Utica and Cregerstown, to enable the 11th Corps to march parallel to it.

¹ See Map No. 2, position night of June 28.

² Not shown on map.

4 A. M. The 11th Corps, Major General Howard, by Utica and Cregertown to Emmettsburg.

4 A. M. The 12th Corps, by Ceresville,¹ Walkersville and Woodsborough, to Taneytown.

4 A. M. The 2d Corps, by Johnsville, Liberty and Union,² to Frizzleburg.

4 A. M. The 3d Corps, by Woodsborough and Middleburg (from Walkersville), to Taneytown.

The 5th Corps will follow the 2d Corps, moving at 8 A. M., camping at Union.³

The 6th Corps, by roads to the right of the 5th and 2d Corps, to New Windsor.

The Reserve Artillery will precede the 12th Corps, at 4 A. M., and camp between Middleburg and Taneytown.

General Lockwood,⁴ with his command, will report to and march with the 12th Corps.

The Engineers and bridge-trains will follow the 5th Corps.

Headquarters will move at 8 A. M. and be to-morrow night at Middleburg. Headquarter's train will move by Ceresville and Woodsborough to Middleburg, at 8 A. M.

The cavalry will guard the right and left flanks and the rear, and give the Commanding General information of the movement and of the enemy in front.

Corps commanders and commanders of detached brigades will report by a staff officer their positions to-morrow night and on all marches in future.

The corps moving on the different lines will keep up communication from time to time, if necessary. They will camp in position, and guard their camps. Corps commanders will send out scouts in their front, as occasion offers, to bring in information. Strong exertions are required and must be made to prevent straggling.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,
Asst. Adj. Gen'l.

On the morning of the 29th of June, before leaving Frederick City, General Meade despatched to General Halleck a communica-

¹ Ceresville not shown on map. ² Or Uniontown. ³ Or Uniontown.

⁴ General Lockwood and command had just arrived from Baltimore as a reinforcement.

tion in which, after giving the position the army would occupy by night, he said:

"If Lee is moving for Baltimore, I expect to get between his main army and that place. If he is crossing the Susquehanna, I shall rely upon General Couch, with his force, holding him until I can fall upon his rear and give him battle. * * * I shall incline to the right towards the Baltimore and Harrisburg Road, to cover that and draw supplies from there if circumstances will permit it; my main objective point being, of course, Lee's army, which I am satisfied has all passed through Hagerstown towards Chambersburg. My endeavors will be in my movements to hold my force well together, with the hope of falling on some portion of Lee's army in detail."

General Meade further stated that the cavalry force between him and Washington, which had caused much anxiety in Washington, would be looked to, and added: "My main point being to find and fight the enemy, I shall have to submit to the cavalry raids around me, in some measure;" and also, in speaking of the impossibility, in the absence of telegraphic communication, of his giving orders to General Schenck, in Baltimore, or to the troops on the Potomac, in his rear, or to General Couch, at Harrisburg, he said: "These circumstances are beyond my control."

Just before leaving Frederick City he seized the first opportunity that had offered to write personally to Mrs. Meade as to the wondrous change in his affairs.

To Mrs. George G. Meade :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, June 29, 1863.

It has pleased Almighty God to place me in the trying position that for some time past we have been talking about. Yesterday morning, at 3 A. M., I was aroused from my sleep by an officer from Washington entering my tent, and after waking me up, saying he had come to give me trouble. At first I thought that it was either to relieve or arrest me, and promptly replied to him, that my conscience was clear, void of offense towards any man; I was prepared for his bad news. He then handed me a communication to read; which I found was an order relieving Hooker from the command and assigning me to it. As, dearest, you know how reluctant we both have been to see me placed in this position, and as it appears to be God's will for some good purpose—at any rate, as a soldier, I had

nothing to do but accept and exert my utmost abilities to command success. This, so help me God, I will do, and trusting to Him, who in his good pleasure has thought it proper to place me where I am, I shall pray for strength and power to get through with the task assigned me. I cannot write you all I would like. I am moving at once against Lee, whom I am in hopes Couch will at least check for a few days; if so, a battle will decide the fate of our country and our cause. Pray earnestly, pray for the success of my country, (for it is my success besides). Love to all. I will try and write often, but must depend on George.

The army, as ordered, had moved promptly, at four o'clock in the morning, and by nightfall, although the march was made over very bad roads, nearly all the corps found themselves at the specified points.¹ The Second Corps, however, through delay in receiving its orders, did not start until eight o'clock, and was halted one mile beyond Uniontown, by two o'clock at night, having in the interval accomplished, with its entire train, a march of over thirty miles. Frizelburg, its destination, was not reached; the distance from Monocacy Junction, from which it had started for Frizelburg, being considerably further than indicated on the maps. This delay in the movement of the Second Corps correspondingly delayed the Fifth Corps, which had to follow on the same road, and in consequence, the latter corps only reached Liberty instead of its destination, Uniontown. The march was disagreeable and fatiguing, owing to a drizzling rain and the very bad condition of the roads. The general advance of the army was twenty miles.

General Meade established his head-quarters at Middleburg, where he passed the night of the 29th of June.

During the day he had been in constant communication with the advancing columns, the whole tenor of his instructions and orders looking to a rapid march. To General Sedgwick, who reported that he would be unable to reach New Windsor, he replied that it was of the utmost importance that he should move early the next morning, and, with his left at Westminster, occupy the railroad terminating at that place. He requested General Sickles to give his immediate personal attention to keeping his trains moving, which were reported at a standstill at Middleburg, and blocking the way. In reply to General Sykes, who reported some detention, he stated that he was

¹ See Map No. 3, position night of June 29.

satisfied with the progress made, and wished him to regulate his movements by endeavoring to cover just so much ground as he could without over-fatiguing the men. To his provost marshal he gave orders to have all stragglers collected and returned to their commands. He ordered General French, at Harper's Ferry, to remove, under escort, the public property from that place to Washington, and with the rest of his command, to join the army without delay; adding, that he expected to engage the enemy within a few days, and looked anxiously to being reinforced by him. This order to General French was, on July 1, when it was found that it would be impossible for him to arrive in time, changed by instructions to him to remain where he then was, at Frederick City, for the purpose of keeping communication open between that place and the army.

Not much had been added during the day to the store of information regarding the movements of the enemy. The reports coming in from the front showed that the army was not in the immediate vicinity of the enemy. In fact, what little information was procurable rather confirmed the opinion that the enemy was still moving in the direction of Harrisburg.

The order of march for June 30, issued at Middleburg on the 29th, directed the Twelfth Corps, passing the Third Corps, to move to Littlestown. The Fifth Corps was ordered to the crossing of Pipe Creek, at Union Mills, on the road between Littlestown and Westminster. The Sixth Corps was ordered to move to Manchester; the First Corps to the crossing of Marsh Creek, half-way to Gettysburg; the Artillery Reserve, following the Twelfth Corps, to the crossing of Piney Run,¹ by the road between Littlestown and Taneytown. The order of march for these corps was, in fact, nothing but continuing the execution of the plan of the previous day. It brought up the right flank to Manchester, the left to beyond Emmettsburg, and the centre to Littlestown; outlying corps being within easy supporting distance.

From Middleburg, in the evening, General Meade again wrote home:

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBURG, MD., June 29, 1863.

We are marching as fast as we can to relieve Harrisburg, but have to keep a sharp lookout that the rebels don't turn around us

¹ Not shown on map.

and get at Washington and Baltimore in our rear. They have a cavalry force in our rear, destroying railroads, etc., with the view of getting me to turn back; but I shall not do it. I am going straight at them, and will settle this thing one way or the other. The men are in good spirits; we have been reinforced so as to have equal numbers with the enemy, and with God's blessing I hope to be successful. Good-by!

The army was off again promptly on the morning of June 30, and the respective corps reached their newly allotted positions before night.

At 11.30 A. M., just before leaving Middleburg, General Meade sent a despatch, of which the following are extracts, to General Reynolds, in reply to a communication of his of that morning:¹

"The enemy undoubtedly occupy the Cumberland Valley in force. Whether the holding of the Cashtown Gap is to prevent our entrance, or is their advance against us, remains to be seen. * * * With Buford at Gettysburg and Mechanicstown, and a regiment in front of Emmetsburg, you ought to be advised in time of their approach. In case of an advance in force, either against you, or Howard at Emmetsburg, you must fall back to that place, and I will reinforce you with the corps nearest to you, which are Sickles's at Taneytown, and Slocum's at Littlestown. You are advised of the general position of the army. We are as concentrated as my present information of the present position of the enemy justifies. I have pushed out the cavalry in all directions to feel for them, and as soon as I can make up any positive opinion as to their position, I will move again. In the meantime, if they advance against me, I must concentrate at that point where they show the strongest force. * * * The only news we have beyond yours is that Stuart, with a large cavalry force, was in Westminster last night, and moved towards Gettysburg—supposed the same force that has been harassing in our rear. If, after occupying your present position, it is in your judgment that you would be in a better position at Emmetsburg than where you are, you can fall back without waiting for the enemy or further orders. Your present position was given more with a view to an advance on Gettysburg than a defensive point."

During the day General Meade moved his head-quarters to Taneytown. The reports that here began to come in from the advance,

¹ See Map No. 4, position noon of June 30.

especially the cavalry, announced that the army was closely approaching the enemy. In consequence, General Meade placed General Reynolds in command of the left wing, consisting of his own corps, the First, and of the Third and Eleventh Corps. Orders were given to General Sickles to move his corps to Emmettsburg, and the two following circulars were forwarded to each corps of the army:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Circular:

The Commanding General has received information that the enemy are advancing, probably in strong force, on Gettysburg. It is the intention to hold this army pretty nearly in the position it now occupies, until the plans of the enemy shall have been more fully developed.

Three corps, 1st, 3d and 11th, are under the command of Major General Reynolds, in the vicinity of Emmettsburg, the 3d Corps being ordered up to that point. The 12th Corps is at Littlestown. General Gregg's division of cavalry is believed to be now engaged with the cavalry of the enemy, near Hanover Junction.

Corps commanders will hold their commands in readiness at a moment's notice, and upon receiving orders, to march against the enemy. Their trains (ammunition trains excepted) must be parked in the rear of the place of concentration. Ammunition wagons and ambulances will alone be permitted to accompany the troops. The men must be provided with three-days' rations in haversacks, and with sixty rounds of ammunition in the boxes and upon the person.

Corps commanders will avail themselves of all the time at their disposal to familiarize themselves with the roads communicating with the different corps.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Circular:

The Commanding General requests that, previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in the struggle. The enemy are on our soil; the whole country now looks anxiously to this army to deliver it from the presence of the foe. Our failure to do so will leave us no

such welcome as the swelling of millions of hearts with pride and joy, as our success would give to every soldier of this army. Homes, firesides and domestic altars are involved. The army has fought well heretofore; it is believed that it will fight more desperately and bravely than ever, if it is addressed in fitting terms.

Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty at this hour.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,
Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.

These circulars were soon succeeded by the following orders for the march of July 1, to be executed immediately upon their receipt:¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Orders:

HEADQUARTERS AT TANETOWN:

3d Corps to Emmetsburg.

2d Corps to Tanetown.

5th Corps to Hanover.

1st Corps to Gettysburg.

11th Corps to Gettysburg.
(or supporting distance).

12th Corps to Two Taverns.

Cavalry to front and flanks, well out in all directions, giving timely notice of operations and movements of the enemy. All empty wagons, surplus baggage, useless animals, and impedimenta of every sort, to Union Bridge,² three miles from Middleburg; a proper officer from each corps with them; supplies will be brought up there as soon as practicable.

The General relies upon every commander to put his column in the lightest possible order. The Telegraph Corps to work east from Hanover, repairing the line, and all commanders to work repairing the line in their vicinity between Gettysburg and Hanover.

Staff-officers to report daily from each corps, and with orderlies to leave for orders. Prompt information to be sent into headquarters at all times. All ready to move to the attack at any moment.

The Commanding General desires you to be informed that, from present information, Longstreet and Hill are at Chambersburg, partly towards Gettysburg; Ewell, at Carlisle and York; movements indicate a disposition to advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg. General Couch telegraphs, 29th, his opinion that enemy's operations

¹See Map No. 5, position night of June 30.

²Not shown on map.

on Susquehanna are more to prevent co-operation with this army than offensive.

The General believes he has relieved Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and now desires to look to his own army and assume position for offensive or defensive, as occasion requires, or rest to the troops. It is not his desire to wear the troops out by excessive fatigue and marches, and thus unfit them for the work they will be called upon to perform.

Vigilance, energy and prompt response to the orders from headquarters are necessary, and the personal attention of corps commanders must be given to reduction of impedimenta. The orders and movements from these headquarters must be carefully and confidentially preserved, that they do not fall into the enemy's hands.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

Asst. Adj. Gen'l.

Late in the afternoon, and during the evening, reports from the cavalry came in, giving notice of the presence of the enemy on both flanks. General Buford had moved his division of cavalry from Middletown through Turner's Gap,¹ successively through Boonesboro, Cavetown, and Monterey Springs,¹ and had encamped on the night of the 29th of June a few miles short of Fairfield. Moving forward very early the next morning, to reach Gettysburg by the way of Fairfield, upon approaching the latter place he came across a body of the enemy, and after skirmishing sufficiently to ascertain it to be in strong force, not wishing to bring on an engagement there, as Fairfield was four or five miles west of the route assigned him, he drew off toward Emmetsburg and was soon on the direct road to Gettysburg. Entering that place in the forenoon, just as the body of the enemy was about to enter it from the direction of Cash-town, he prepared to advance upon them, when they retired in the direction from which they had come, leaving pickets about four or five miles from Gettysburg.

General Kilpatrick, who that morning had moved his division of cavalry from Littlestown to Hanover, reported that, on entering the latter town, he had encountered a body of Stuart's cavalry and, after a sharp fight, had succeeded in driving it out of the town, capturing several prisoners and a battle-flag, the enemy retreating in the direc-

¹ Not shown on map.

tion of York. He stated, also, that it was reported that a division of the enemy's infantry had left York at daybreak.

This information, with various other reports, having reached General Meade during the night of June 30, he was convinced that the enemy was advised of his movements. It was therefore evident to him that a general engagement would not be long deferred.

Since assuming the command of the army everything had been done by General Meade to push it forward. Under General Hooker it had been almost continuously marching and manœuvring, after leaving the Rappahannock, and now, with only one day's intermission, it had just completed two hard marches. The weather for the greatest part of the time had been intensely hot, the roads stifling from dust, and besides, for the last two days there had been a disagreeable, drizzling rain. General Meade feared that the troops would break down if pushed any harder, and in reporting to General Halleck, on the afternoon of June 30, he stated that he might be obliged to rest them for a day; although, of course, he should be compelled to govern his action by what he learned of the movements of the enemy.

Having made all his dispositions for the following day, General Meade wrote home:

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS, TANEYTOWN, June 30, 1863.

All is going on well. I think I have relieved Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and that Lee has now come to the conclusion that he must attend to other matters. I continue well, but much oppressed with a sense of responsibility and the magnitude of the great interests entrusted to me. Of course, in time I will become accustomed to this. Love, blessings and kisses to all. Pray for me and beseech our heavenly Father to permit me to be an instrument to save my country and advance a just cause.

Let us now turn to the Confederate army, to learn what it had been doing since crossing the Potomac.

On the night of June 27—that is to say, about the very same time when General Meade was put in command of the Army of the Potomac—the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia was across

the Potomac, had passed up the Cumberland Valley, and had entered Pennsylvania.

Before beginning this campaign the Army of Northern Virginia had been reorganized. It now consisted of three corps of infantry: the First Corps, under command of General James Longstreet; the Second, under Lieutenant-General Richard S. Ewell; the Third, under Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill; and the cavalry, under Major-General J. E. B. Stuart. It is supposed that, preparatory to so important a campaign as that about to ensue, involving an invasion of the heart of the hostile territory, and from the success of which important results were expected to flow, General Lee recruited his army from every available source.

General Ewell's corps had led the advance of the infantry, and Rodes's division of it reached the Potomac on June 15. It crossed the river at once, and, resting on the other side for a few days, resumed its march on the 19th of June, pursuing the direct route by way of Hagerstown and Greencastle to Chambersburg, where it was overtaken by General Johnson's division of the same corps, which had crossed the Potomac at Shepardstown on the 18th of June. Preceded by Jenkins's brigade of cavalry, together they advanced to Carlisle, arriving there on the 27th.¹ The Third Division of General Ewell's corps (Early's) crossed the Potomac at Shepardstown on the 22d, marched along the western base of South Mountain, and reached Greenwood on the 24th. Resuming his march on the 26th, and proceeding by way of Cashtown, Mummasburg, and Berlin, General Early reached York on the 28th.² At Cashtown he had detached one of his brigades (Gordon's), with White's battalion of cavalry, to march by way of Gettysburg, which force passed through the town on the same day, driving out of it some militia cavalry, and after levying contribution upon the town, and burning some bridges and cars, it proceeded on the direct road to York and entered that place on the 28th, just in advance of the rest of the division. From that point General Early pushed out General Gordon's brigade, with cavalry, to seize the bridge which crosses the Susquehanna at Wrightsville. It had been his intention to cross his whole command by this bridge, march on Lancaster, cut the Pennsylvania Railroad, and then march upon and attack Harrisburg in the rear. His purpose, however, was frustrated by a body of militia stationed at the bridge, which, upon the approach of General Gordon, retreated across it to

¹ See Map No. 6, position night of June 27.

² General Early encamped on the 27th at Berlin.

Columbia and fired the bridge. General Early, thus foiled in his intention, then moved General Gordon's brigade back to York, and sent out parties in all directions, burning bridges and railway stations.

On the 24th and 25th the corps of Generals Longstreet and Hill had crossed the Potomac; that of the former at Williamsport, of the latter at Shepardstown. Concentrating at Hagerstown, they marched on Chambersburg, where they arrived on the 27th and encamped.

From this point General Lee, present in person with this part of his army, and unaware of the crossing of the Potomac by the Federal army, ordered a general advance of his forces, on the 30th, on Harrisburg, a movement with which that of General Early, detailed above, and frustrated by the burning of the bridge over the Susquehanna at Wrightsville, was intended to be combined.

General Ewell, who, on the 27th, we left at Carlisle with the divisions of Rodes and Johnson, was prepared and waiting to begin the movement on Harrisburg. The cavalry had thoroughly reconnoitred the country in that direction, their advanced scouts approaching on the 29th to within a few miles of the town.

The troops were in the highest spirits. Everything to them looked favorable. Although they had marched far since leaving the Rappahannock, they had had, at intervals since crossing the Potomac, several days of rest. The campaign, so far, had been eminently successful. They had swept down the Shenandoah Valley, carrying everything before them. Their march up the Cumberland Valley had been unopposed, and made so leisurely that they had been able to levy from the towns they passed through, and from the surrounding country, ample contributions in provisions and in all needful supplies of clothing, forage, etc. The greatest enthusiasm pervaded the ranks. It was taken for granted that the order to march meant the fall of the capital of the great State of Pennsylvania.

General D. N. Couch, a veteran of the Army of the Potomac, had, early in June, been summoned to take command of the newly organized Department of the Susquehanna, head-quarters at Harrisburg. In the brief interval allowed by coming events, every effort had been made by this officer to fortify the approaches to Harrisburg, situated on the left bank of the Susquehanna. Under various calls of the President, and of the Governor of Pennsylvania, for troops for the pending emergency, he had been able to collect a respectable force of militia, which was hastily organized as well as circumstances

would permit, and divided into commands over which he placed a number of experienced officers absent from the army, either recovering from wounds or on leave of absence, who promptly volunteered their services on the occasion. It was upon this force that General Meade counted for checking and delaying General Lee's advance sufficiently to enable him to come to its relief. More than this was not to be expected. Undoubtedly it would have acquitted itself as well as its hasty organization and discipline, untried by battle, would have admitted. It is not to be supposed that it could have long withstood the bronzed veterans of the Army of Northern Virginia.

But suddenly upon the strategical horizon appeared a foe worthy of the steel of the Army of Northern Virginia. General Lee received word at Chambersburg, through a scout, that his old antagonist of many a hard-fought field, the Army of the Potomac, was rapidly advancing. Necessity demanded that attention should be first paid to its movements. It was on the night of the 28th of June that General Lee received the information that the whole of the Federal army had crossed the Potomac and had advanced beyond Frederick City. This at once compelled him to stop the general advance upon Harrisburg and concentrate his army.¹

General Lee states in his report of the campaign that the absence of the cavalry, commanded by General Stuart, had prevented his obtaining definite information of the movements of the Federal army. Judging by his report, he certainly did not expect General Stuart to pursue the course he took. General Stuart, on the contrary, speaks positively in his report of his having had authority from General Lee for the movement which he made. The discrepancy is easily reconcilable by the supposition that General Lee's orders to General Stuart were not explicit, but allowed a certain latitude, which in his judgment was not used with discretion. This is evidently not the place to enter upon a discussion of the merits of the case, even if it could be done with the faintest hope of adjusting satisfactorily the burden of responsibility. The province of this history extends no further than to state that there was evidently some misunderstanding of intention between Generals Lee and Stuart as to the projected movements of the latter when detached from the Confederate army. One thing only in this connection is certain: that from the 24th of June to the 2d of July General Lee was without the services of the

¹ See Map No. 7, position night of June 28, No. 2.

main body of his cavalry, under General Stuart, upon which he had counted for information of the enemy's movements.

In what manner the cavalry of General Stuart had been engaged from the 24th to the 30th of June must now form the subject of a necessary digression, in order to afford the reader a clear comprehension of the way in which all the forces on both sides eventually reached the field of Gettysburg.

On the night of June 24th General Stuart, who had since the affairs at Aldie and Upperville been watching Ashby's and Snicker's Gaps, in the Blue Ridge, secretly rendezvoused three brigades of cavalry (Hampton's, Fitz Lee's, and W. H. F. Lee's, the latter under command of Colonel Chambliss) at Salem Depot, on the Manassas Gap Railroad. It was his intention to move in rear of the Army of the Potomac, intercept its communications with Washington, delay its passage over the Potomac, embarrass its advance, and then join General Lee north of the Potomac, and, placing himself on the right flank of the Confederate army, take part in the purposed movement on Harrisburg and the Susquehanna. The cavalry brigades of Robertson and Jones were left to hold the positions on the Blue Ridge which he was leaving.

Marching from Salem at 1 A. M. on June 25, and moving to the right, he first tried to pass by way of Haymarket and Gainesville to the west of Centreville. Finding General Hancock, with the Second Corps, marching in this direction, and, as he expresses it, "having the right of way," he moved back to Buckland, and marched thence to Brentsville and to the crossing of Bull Run at Wolf's Run Shoal. Here he crossed on the morning of the 27th, and pushing ahead through Fairfax Court House and Dranesville, striking the Potomac opposite the mouth of Seneca Creek on the night of the same day, by great exertions got his whole force across the river by twelve o'clock that night. At this point he captured a good many prisoners, and supplies in boats on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, destroyed a lock gate, and otherwise inflicted much damage. He here ascertained that the Federal army had crossed the Potomac, and moving toward Frederick City, was interposing between General Lee and himself. Now realizing the importance of reaching his commanding general as speedily as possible, he determined to push directly north, hoping to come up with Early's column, which he knew ought to be at York. Starting soon on the 28th, he was not long in reaching Rockville, on the main highway between Washington and Frederick.

Brushing away a few cavalymen belonging to the defences of Washington, he here cut the telegraph wires and captured a large wagon train of supplies for the Army of the Potomac, together with a number of prisoners. The train he very effectually destroyed, reserving only such wagons and supplies as could be carried along.

This was the point of time at which, as will be perceived by the preceding narrative, General Meade was first apprised of the presence of the enemy's cavalry.

The raid upon Rockville occupied the cavalry a good part of the day. When finished, it pushed forward and reached Brookville at night, when, finding that the number of prisoners was embarrassing, they were paroled, and it kept on, marching all night, passing through Cooksville on the morning of the 29th, and striking the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Hood's Mill. Here the cavalry tore up the track for miles, destroyed the bridge at Sykesville, and cut the telegraph wires, thus severing all communication between the Army of the Potomac and Washington and Baltimore. Hence it marched direct on Westminster, reaching that place at 5 P. M. on June 29, where it had a smart skirmish with a portion of the Fifth Delaware Cavalry, which had been sent out from Baltimore. It soon disposed of this force, though with the loss of two officers and several men. The head of the column was halted that night (the 29th) at Union Mills, while the column remained strung out between that place and Westminster.

Early on June 30 the cavalry was off again, and going by a cross cut reached Hanover about 10 A. M., just as General Kilpatrick's column of cavalry was passing through the town. A severe fight ensued, which lasted several hours, and resulted in General Stuart's falling back from the town. The situation had become critical for him. Much embarrassed by what captured wagons he had retained, and his direct route north intercepted by General Kilpatrick, he determined to make a *détour* to the right, through Jefferson, and thence in the direction of York, trusting to be able to join General Early's column of infantry. He hastened forward, therefore, as fast as compatible with the fatigued condition of men and horses, now almost spent with marching. Up to this time he had had no communication with General Lee, and had been unable to find out where the army was. But, having accompanied General Stuart thus far, we must leave him struggling along on this dark night, over rough roads, to return to General Lee, and resume the main thread of the narrative by mention of the new dispositions necessitated by the knowledge

which he had suddenly acquired of the movement of the Army of the Potomac.

It was said, before entering upon the digression which has accounted for the absence of General Stuart's cavalry, and for General Lee's prolonged ignorance of the movements of the Army of the Potomac—circumstances dependent upon each other—that General Lee had, upon receiving the intelligence of the presence of that army beyond Frederick City, at once changed his plans and countermanded the movement upon Harrisburg. The time of a possible *coup de main* had now evidently passed. Immediate concentration was of vital importance to the Confederate army. Just what General Meade said, in one of his hastily written missives, that he thought he had obliged the enemy to do the enemy had been obliged to do; for by his own dispositions in advancing, to have relieved the threatened outlying places, Harrisburg and Washington, the enemy's objective points in the zone of operations, meant that the enemy must concentrate or be lost.

Consequently General Lee at once addressed himself to the task of concentration, and fearing lest his communications by way of the Cumberland Valley should be interrupted, he determined, in order to prevent a movement of the Army of the Potomac further toward the west, to concentrate his army east of the mountains. Accordingly Generals Longstreet and Hill were ordered to concentrate at Cash-town, and General Ewell was ordered to withdraw from Harrisburg to the same point.

Under these orders, General Ewell, on the 29th, sent Johnson's division, with the trains, back by way of Shippensburg to Greenwood, and taking Rodes's division himself, left Carlisle on the morning of the 30th, and passing through Petersburg, halted at Heidlersburg and bivouacked for the night.¹ On the same day, the 29th, that these two divisions marched, General Ewell despatched orders to his remaining division, Early's, at York, to retire and join the rest of the corps on the west side of South Mountain. General Early, on the 30th, moved in that direction, marching by way of Berlin toward Heidlersburg, so as to be able to move thence either to Shippensburg or Greenwood, as circumstances might demand, and encamped that night about three miles from Heidlersburg.

General Hill, at Chambersburg, moved Heth's division, on the 29th, to Cashtown, followed the next morning by the other two divi-

¹ See Map No. 8, position night of June 29, No. 2.

sions of his corps. Heth, on the morning of the 30th, still in the advance, sent Pettigrew's brigade of his division forward from Cashtown to Gettysburg, to secure a supply of shoes that he had heard were there. Pettigrew, approaching the suburbs of Gettysburg, unexpectedly came across General Buford's cavalry, which he, supposing it to be supported by infantry, did not deem it advisable to encounter, but falling back to Cashtown, reported the presence of the enemy.

General Longstreet, with two divisions, followed General Hill, on the 30th, and was at Greenwood that night. He left his Third Division (Pickett's) at Chambersburg, guarding the trains, to await the arrival of Imboden, who, with a brigade of cavalry, had been at McConnellsburg, and had been ordered to Chambersburg to relieve Pickett. Up to that time General Imboden had been operating on the left of the Confederate army on its march into Maryland and Pennsylvania, and had inflicted great damage along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad between Martinsburg and Cumberland,¹ and to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; had been at Hancock on the 27th; and, under orders, had marched to McConnellsburg, collecting supplies all along his route.

The reader has followed the strategical operations of the opposing forces. He sees them now almost face to face, in all but battle-array. On the night of June 30, the Army of the Potomac occupied the following positions:² General Buford, with two brigades of cavalry, having, as mentioned, caused the advance of Pettigrew's brigade to retire upon Cashtown, was at Gettysburg, with his pickets well thrown out and patrols scouring the country in all directions, gathering information. General Reynolds was on Marsh Creek, four miles from Gettysburg, ready to march for that place early the next morning. General Howard was within supporting distance of General Reynolds, between him and Emmettsburg. General Sickles was at Emmettsburg. General Hancock was at Uniontown. General Slocum was about a mile beyond Littlestown, on the road to Hanover. General Sykes was at Union Mills. General Sedgwick was within two miles of Manchester. General Gregg, with his division of cavalry, was at Manchester, and General Kilpatrick, with his division, at Hanover. General Meade's head-quarters were at Taneytown.

The same night, the 30th of June, the Army of Northern Virginia was disposed in the following manner: General Hill was at Cashtown;

¹ About thirty miles west of Hancock, off of map.

² See Map No. 9, position night of June 30, No. 2.

his advance, consisting of Heth's and Pender's divisions, toward Gettysburg; his Third Division (Anderson's) at Fayetteville. General Longstreet, with two of his divisions (McLaw's and Hood's), was at Greenwood; his Third Division (Pickett's) at Chambersburg. General Ewell, with Rodes's division, was at Heidlersburg. General Early's division was within three miles of Heidlersburg. General Johnson, with his division, was at Scotland. Jenkins's brigade of cavalry was with General Johnson, convoying General Ewell's trains. Colonel White's battalion was on General Early's left, on the direct road from York to Gettysburg. General Stuart, with the main body of the cavalry, was, as we have seen, making the best of his way between Jefferson and Dover, searching for some portion of the main body of the army. General Lee's head-quarters had been just outside of Chambersburg since the 25th. On the morning of the 30th he rode to Greenwood, where he passed the night.

When Lee started from Fredericksburg he could have contemplated nothing more definite than the invasion of Pennsylvania by such a march that, while his right flank was for a long time protected by the Blue Ridge and his base of supplies well established at the most salient bend of the Potomac toward the zone of his contemplated operations, he should be able, by spreading out his corps over that zone, to threaten, and even to capture, Washington, Baltimore, Lancaster, Harrisburg, and also, in this event, Philadelphia. Of so much of a plan of operations as involved threatening these places he could be sure, but of nothing more, leaving all else to be determined by circumstances, which hourly changed, and which culminated in the battle of Gettysburg.

But Lee's march, even from the beginning, was compelled to have reference to the known and the probable movements of the Army of the Potomac, although those movements were trammelled by a responsibility from which Lee was exempt—the necessity of covering a capital and two rich and populous cities. Hooker, constrained by Lee's initiative to follow his course as nearly as possible in a parallel line, and to confine Lee's march to one line of invasion, had still that other necessity imposed upon him, to pursue in such a manner, at such a rate, and with such dispositions, as to make sure of covering at least Washington and Baltimore. Up, therefore, to the moment when Hooker, having crossed the Potomac, was superseded by Meade, at Frederick City, Maryland, although the move-

ments of the two armies had acted and reacted on each other, they were then, from that time forth to the end, to influence each other reciprocally, with ever quicker and quicker impulse. From the time when Meade took command, the enemy having swept out toward the east from beyond the mountains, the advance of the Army of the Potomac had to be well extended toward the right as well as toward the left. As for the determination of the exact locality of the battle-field, if there were to be a battle, it did not depend upon the decision of either Meade or Lee, but upon many circumstances which each could modify, but could not altogether control; for besides the circumstances of ground and the disposition of troops, each general was by his action creating varying circumstances for the other. Not until the order came to march upon Gettysburg, did circumstances prescribe to each exactly the same course. When Lee's information that the Army of the Potomac had reached Frederick City and was advancing, caused him to recall Ewell from Carlisle and Early from York, he had accepted the necessity of his own concentration, and the consequence of the enemy's concentration to meet it. But the exact point where the battle was to take place must have still remained at that time an insoluble problem to both generals.

The battle-field might have been anywhere from Chambersburg and Heidlersburg, and beyond, counting from west to east; or anywhere from Chambersburg and Heidlersburg to Emmettsburg and Pipe Creek, counting from north to south. Ewell and Early could just as easily have countermarched to Lee at Chambersburg as to Cashtown, near Gettysburg. But Gettysburg, although somewhat more distant than Chambersburg from Lee's base at Williamsport, had for him the inestimable advantage, in view of the then position of the Army of the Potomac, of rendering secure his line of communication with Williamsport. His marching on Gettysburg meant the maintenance of the invasion. He was compelled, under the circumstances of Meade's advance, to converge upon Gettysburg, but not necessarily with the knowledge that the battle would take place there. That was a question which depended upon the final action of the Army of the Potomac. If the Army of the Potomac had not at that point of time been so well advanced and in hand as it proved to be, despite the necessities which had embarrassed its progress, Lee must either have retreated and abandoned the invasion, or else have advanced south beyond Gettysburg.

Lee had no alternative but to deliver battle speedily or speedily

to retreat. In the contingency suggested, of the Army of the Potomac not having been sufficiently advanced and in hand as to be able to meet the enemy at Gettysburg, Lee would have been obliged to push beyond, and in all probability the battle would have taken place on Pipe Creek, for the simple reason that, Meade having compelled the enemy to relinquish the hold which he was about to take upon the Susquehanna, there was no such urgent necessity of immediate fighting laid upon him as upon Lee. The tables had been suddenly turned. Only two days before the battle it was more urgent for the Army of the Potomac to meet the Army of Northern Virginia than for the Army of Northern Virginia to meet the Army of the Potomac. Now, Meade was in a position where it was more urgent for Lee to seek him than to be sought; for not only was the line of the Susquehanna safe, and Washington and Baltimore covered, but Lee was in a hostile country, with the line of his communications endangered.

That neither general knew of the tactical importance of Gettysburg is no discredit to either, in view of the slight knowledge in both armies of the country in which they were operating, and in view of the poorness of the maps. The place of Lee's concentration was dictated solely by his knowledge of the strategic importance of Gettysburg, under the circumstances of his having been compelled to withdraw Ewell from the direction of Harrisburg; but exactly where the battle would be fought he could not have known until much later than the time of his issuing orders for the concentration of his corps at Gettysburg.

Similarly, Meade, although he knew of the strategic importance of Gettysburg, and consequently, that Lee might attempt to concentrate there, could not, twenty-four hours before the battle, have been able, any more than Lee, to predict with certainty that the impending battle would take place at Gettysburg. Then, at once, from that moment, events hastened on, and what had only a short while before taken days to develop became matter of hourly development, until both commanders found themselves urging their troops forward toward Gettysburg, both compelled by the fact of its strategical relations to their previous movements, but neither, until the actual ground was reached, at all aware of the military strength of the two positions that it affords.

To sum up, Meade's movements compelled Lee to concentrate somewhere; the strategical importance of Gettysburg, growing out

of the relative positions of the opposing forces, constrained Lee to endeavor to concentrate there; and that same cause, in turn, constrained Meade to endeavor to anticipate, or at least to meet him there.

On the night of June 30, Meade became satisfied, from information received from various sources, that the enemy had relinquished his hold upon the Susquehanna, through having become aware of the movements of the Army of the Potomac, and was in consequence concentrating his forces. He was therefore aware that he might expect shortly to come in contact with the enemy, but when and where, as has been proved, it was then impossible to predict with certainty. In order to be prepared, if possible on ground of his own choosing, to give him battle, in case he should advance over the South Mountain, Meade, while on the march, had instructed his engineers to make an examination with reference to the selection of ground having relation to the then general position of the army, upon which, if occasion should arise, the army might find it desirable to concentrate.

On June 30, General Humphreys, commanding the Second Division of the Third Corps, was instructed by the commanding general to make a similar examination at Emmettsburg, and on the following day Reynolds was instructed to acquaint himself thoroughly with the country, conferring, if expedient, with General Humphreys as to the ground. He had previously been told that he might fall back on Emmettsburg if he thought, after examination, that it was a better position than where he was at Marsh Creek.

As the result of the first examination mentioned, a position on the general line of Pipe Creek had been selected for the contingency of battle in that vicinity, and a circular was issued, notifying corps commanders that the occupation of that position might become necessary in the specified eventuality, in which they were directed how to move, and where to place their troops along that line.

The intention of this circular has sometimes been much misunderstood. It was written before Meade had any positive knowledge that the enemy was moving on the Cashtown Road. In fact, all that he positively knew at the time of the issue of the order was that the enemy was concentrating. The circular was merely a preliminary order of manœuvre to meet a given contingency. This circular has also been misrepresented by some who can hardly be thought to have misunderstood it, but who, it must be supposed, were actuated in their misinterpretation of it by desire to detract from Meade's

military reputation. These persons have asserted that the circular proves that, at that time, Meade was desirous of retiring before, instead of fighting, the enemy. Now, the whole tenor of the circular is opposed to that theory, as completely as Meade's other action, from the moment of his taking command, is opposed to that theory. The circular was written late on the night of June 30. The intention was that it should be in the hands of the several corps commanders early on the following morning, July 1. There was, however, delay in expediting it, so much so that General Reynolds never received it.

Language is powerless to express more clearly than this circular does the idea that, through the fortunes of war, the army might have to receive, instead of to make, an attack; that, if attack were made by the enemy, then the position, provisorily selected at Pipe Creek, being strong, and known to the corps commanders, was the best possible to occupy; and that, finally, as no man could say what a few hours might bring forth, the army might be obliged to take the offensive from the positions which it then occupied. In one word, if the army was obliged at first to receive attack, then there was the prearranged place to receive it; if the army had to take the offensive, then orders would be forthcoming for that. And this, which follows, was the clear and concise manner in which the idea was expressed, so that no honorable man in his senses, with full knowledge of the circumstances, can put any other construction upon it than the one assigned:

"This order is communicated that a general plan, perfectly understood by all, may be had for receiving attack, if made in strong force upon any portion of our present position. Developments may cause the Commanding General to assume the offensive from his present positions."

To assume the offensive from his then position was what happened to occur. At the time when he issued the circular, the other alternative was just as likely to occur, and, at least, even if it were not, it was the part of a prudent general to guard against it. It was wise for Meade to learn about the ground over which the army was passing, and to instruct his officers how to meet a probable crisis, but no more forecasting and wise than he always was.

Early in the day of July 1 the commanding general sent to Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth Corps, at Manchester, on the extreme right, the following despatch:

*July 1, 1863.***COMMANDING OFFICER SIXTH CORPS:**

I am directed by the Commanding General to state that it would appear from reports received, that the enemy is moving in heavy force on Gettysburg (Ewell from Heidlersburg, and Hill from Cash-town Pass), and it is not improbable he will reach that place before the command under Major General Reynolds (the First and Eleventh Corps), now on the way, can arrive there. Should such be the case, and General Reynolds finds himself in the presence of a superior force, he is instructed to hold the enemy in check, and fall slowly back. If he is able to do this, the line indicated in the circular of to-day will be occupied to-night. Should circumstances render it necessary for the Commanding General to fight the enemy to-day, the troops are posted as follows for the support of Reynolds's command, viz.: On his right, at "Two Taverns," the Twelfth Corps; at Hanover, the Fifth Corps; the Second Corps is on the road between Taneytown and Gettysburg; the Third Corps is at Emmettsburg.

This information is conveyed to you, that you may have your Corps in readiness to move in such direction as may be required at a moment's notice.

Very respectfully, etc.,

S. WILLIAMS,

Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.

Thus, early in the day, Sedgwick had his warning of the only two contingencies probable and approaching, and full information of the disposition of the troops in the advance and on the right flank, and was therefore duly prepared for either emergency implied in the despatch and the circular. At the point of time noted, it was impossible, as has been said, to predict with certainty whether the battle that was imminent would take place at Gettysburg or at Pipe Creek. All that could be known with certainty was that it would first take place on the left of the general advance. Hence Sedgwick, who, as has been mentioned, was furthest away on the right, was early forewarned of the situation on the left and advance, in order that he might be able to co-operate to the best advantage according to circumstances.

It will be remembered that Buford, with two brigades of his division of cavalry, had entered Gettysburg on the afternoon of June 30, and that, on his appearance, an advance of the enemy had withdrawn

toward Cashtown. During the night of the 30th he pushed out scouting parties in every direction, and from information gathered by them he became convinced that the enemy was concentrating near him. He therefore proceeded to dispose his troops to the best advantage, to make as good a resistance as possible to the enemy's advance, hoping to keep him beyond the town, and hold him in check until the infantry under Reynolds could come up.

About 8 A. M., of July 1, Buford's advanced pickets gave warning that the enemy was approaching on the Chambersburg Road.¹ Gamble's brigade was promptly moved forward and formed in line of battle across the Chambersburg Road, about a mile beyond the Seminary,² with skirmishers well out, and with Calef's battery, Second U. S. Artillery, disposed along the line. The advance of the enemy, Heth's division of A. P. Hill's corps, a heavy column, marching down the road, now appeared. Skirmishing soon began, and as the Confederates came within range, Lieutenant Roder, in charge of the right section of Calef's battery, fired the first gun, which opened the battle of Gettysburg. Heth then deployed his two leading brigades, Archer on the right of the Chambersburg Road and Davis on the left, and continued his advance.

Gamble made a stubborn fight, but being outnumbered, was forced to fall back to the next ridge, about two hundred yards to the rear. Devins's brigade was brought up and deployed on Gamble's right, his line extending across the Mummasburg Road,³ with a line of pickets well out to the right and rear, across the Carlisle Road⁴ to Rock Creek,⁵ in which direction it was also reported that the enemy was advancing. Buford handled his two small brigades admirably. Although opposed by a strong force of infantry, which was gradually overlapping both of his flanks, he made a sturdy resistance to the enemy and held him well in check. As soon as the action had begun, he had sent word of it to Reynolds, and now anxiously awaited succor.

Reynolds, who had passed the night at the point where the Em-

¹ Chambersburg Pike, not shown on map, extends from Chambersburg to Gettysburg through Cashtown.

² The seminary, not shown on map, is three-quarters mile west of Gettysburg.

³ Mummasburg Road, not shown on map, extends from Mummasburg to Gettysburg.

⁴ Carlisle Road, not shown on map, enters Gettysburg from the north.

⁵ Rock Creek, name not shown on map, flows south, three-quarters mile east of Gettysburg.

mettsburg Pike crosses Marsh Creek, set his corps in motion, at 8 A. M., under his orders of the previous day, on the road to Gettysburg, Wadsworth's division in the advance, with Doubleday's following, and Robinson's bringing up the rear. He had directed Howard, at Emmettsburg, to follow with the Eleventh Corps.

When about two miles from Gettysburg, Reynolds heard the guns of the cavalry hard at work beyond the town. Here he was met by a messenger from Buford, announcing the approach of the enemy in force. Instead, therefore, of continuing in the course which he had been pursuing toward the town, he deflected the head of his column to the left, off the main road, instructed Wadsworth to push on rapidly in a northwesterly direction, toward the firing, despatched word back to Howard to urge on the Eleventh Corps, and galloped on in advance and joined Buford at the Seminary.

What general plan Reynolds intended to pursue will never be known. This much, however, is known, that he was one of the most capable and trustworthy officers in the Army of the Potomac, and that he had the full confidence of the commanding general. The day that the command of the army was conferred upon Meade, at Frederick City, Reynolds visited him, to tender his congratulations, and to assure him of his hearty support. They were on that occasion long in consultation, and the commanding general fully explained to him his plans as far as they could be formed. These were to push forward the army as rapidly as possible in the direction of Harrisburg; in which direction it was then supposed that the enemy was moving, to compel him to relinquish his hold upon the Susquehanna, and to force him to battle whenever and wherever found. On June 30 was committed to Reynolds the responsible duty of commanding the advance of the army. Almost the last communication from Meade to Reynolds (which has been elsewhere quoted from), beginning with the words, "Your despatch is received. The enemy undoubtedly occupy the Cumberland Valley, from Chambersburg, in force; whether the holding of Cashtown Gap is to prevent our entrance, or is their advance against us, remains to be seen," etc., was timed 11.30 A. M., on June 30. The very last communication from Meade to Reynolds, when he had already ordered him to advance on Gettysburg, reads as follows:

July 1, 1863.

The telegraphic intelligence received from General Couch, with the various movements reported by Buford, seem to indicate the

concentration of the enemy either at Chambersburg, or at a point situated somewhere on a line drawn between Chambersburg and York, through Heidlersburg, and to the north of Gettysburg.

The Commanding General cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to attack until he learns something more definite of the point at which the enemy is concentrating. This he hopes to do during the day. Meanwhile, he would like to have your views upon the subject, at least so far as concerns your position.

If the enemy is concentrated to the right of Gettysburg, that point would not, at first glance, seem to be a proper strategic point of concentration for this army. If the enemy is concentrating in front of Gettysburg, or to the left of it, the General is not sufficiently informed of the nature of the country to judge of its character either for an offensive or defensive position. The number of the enemy are estimated at about 92,000 infantry, with 270 pieces of artillery, and his cavalry, from six to eight thousand. Our numbers ought to equal it, and with the arrival of General French's command, which should get up to-morrow, exceed it, if not too much weakened by straggling and fatigue.

The General having assumed command in obedience to orders, with the position of affairs leaving no time to learn the condition of the army as to *morale* and proportionate strength, compared with its last return, would gladly receive from you any suggestions as to the points laid down in this note. He feels that you know more of the condition of the troops in your vicinity, and the country, than he does.

General Humphreys, who is at Emmettsburg with the Third Corps, the General considers an excellent adviser as to the nature of the country for defensive or offensive operations. If near enough to call him to consultation with you, please do so, without interference with the responsibilities that devolve upon you both. You have all the information which the General has received, and the General would like to have your views.

The movement of your Corps to Gettysburg was ordered before the positive knowledge of the enemy's withdrawal from Harrisburg and concentration was received.

What we know of Reynolds, subsequently to this time, is very little, as he fell among the first on the field of battle; but that little is conclusive as to his having at once realized the military situation

and taken every means to meet it. He had had the fullest understanding with the commanding general, and possessed the definite information as to his intentions conveyed in the despatch just quoted. Even if he had received the Pipe Creek circular, that would not have embarrassed him or any other good general, for he would have seen that its instructions were conformable with the military situation as he found it. As the officer in command of the advance, put there for the express purpose of his being able to act with judgment in every contingency covered by the expressed intentions of his superior, he acted, when the special case did arise, just as the commanding general had contemplated that he would act. Meade, let it be remembered, had said in his despatch: "The commanding general cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to attack until he learns something more definite of the point at which the enemy is concentrating. This he hopes to do during the day." The eyes, the ears, and the brain which Meade, in default of his being able to be omnipresent, had selected for the advance, soon obtained that definite knowledge of which he had spoken, requisite, as he had said, to enable him with advantage to move to attack. In conformity with his instructions, perception and action were necessarily simultaneous on the part of Reynolds, when he suddenly acquired knowledge of the imminence of the concentration of the enemy at Gettysburg.

During the morning the Second Corps, under Hancock, had been marching from Uniontown, and about eleven o'clock halted outside of Taneytown and bivouacked. Hancock rode over to the commanding general's head-quarters and reported to him. In a long and earnest conference between them, Meade fully explained his views and plans, and expressed his intentions to fight a battle in front, if practicable, and if not there, wherever practicable. Hancock then returned to his command.

About half-past eleven o'clock Meade received the first positive intelligence of the movement of the enemy on Gettysburg, and of the engagement of his advance at that place. It was brought to him by an aide-de-camp of Reynolds's, Captain Stephen M. Weed, who had left his gallant chief at ten o'clock, at the moment when Reynolds and Buford had just met outside of Gettysburg, and who had ridden hard with his message. Captain Weed reported that General Reynolds had said to him, "Ride at your utmost speed to General Meade. Tell him the enemy are advancing in strong force, and that

I fear they will get to the heights beyond the town before I can. I will fight them inch by inch, and if driven into the town, I will barricade the streets and hold them back as long as possible. Don't spare your horse—never mind if you kill him."

General Meade seemed disturbed at first at this news, lest he should lose the position referred to at Gettysburg. At his request the officer repeated the message, when he seemed reassured, and said: "Good! that is just like Reynolds; he will hold on to the bitter end."

It must have been shortly after this, judging by the distance, and by the time at which the despatch was written, that Meade received a message from Buford. It was as follows:

To General Meade:

GETTYSBURG, July 1, 10.10 A. M.

The enemy's force (A. P. Hill's) are advancing on me at this point and driving my pickets and skirmishers *very* rapidly. There is also a large force at Heidlersburg, that is driving my pickets at that point from that direction. General Reynolds is advancing, and is within three miles of this point, with his leading division. I am positive that the whole of A. P. Hill's force is advancing.

JOHN BUFORD,
Brig. Gen.

About one o'clock news was brought to the commanding general of the engagement and of the death of Reynolds at Gettysburg. Upon receipt of the intelligence of this not only great, but, at the present juncture, doubly serious loss to the army, in the death of Reynolds, Meade, of course, realized at once the urgency of despatching to the front some one who might, through familiarity with his own views and intentions, be able to replace him. Hancock, gallant soldier as he was, and possessing also, as he did, the full confidence of Meade in his ability, was also, through the late, long, and earnest conference, and through his being still just at hand, the officer in whom all requirements met to replace the fallen commander. Accordingly, Meade at once directed Hancock to proceed to Gettysburg, to take command of the troops there, and to advise him as to the exact situation of affairs, and as to the practicability of fighting a battle there. His written instructions to Hancock were these:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863—1.10 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, SECOND CORPS:

The Major General Commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed or badly wounded. He directs that you turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon; that you proceed to the front, and by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General Reynolds's death, you assume command of the corps there assembled, viz., the Eleventh, First, and Third, at Emmettsburg. If you think the ground and position there a better one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, you will so advise the General, and he will order all the troops up. You know the General's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

Later. 1.15 P. M.

Reynolds has possession of Gettysburg, and the enemy are reported falling back from the front of Gettysburg. Hold your column ready to move.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

S. WILLIAMS,

A. A. Gen'l.

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.

Hancock at once turned over the command of the Second Corps to Gibbon, commander of its Second Division, and promptly proceeded to Gettysburg; and General Meade soon ordered Gibbon to move the corps for that place.

Hancock, as was seen in his written instructions, had been ordered to report, upon his arrival at Gettysburg, as to the character of the ground there, with reference to its availability for fighting a battle, and had been informed that, if his report were favorable, the commanding general would move the whole army forward. But, before hearing from him, Meade, owing to information received from officers returning from the front, had become satisfied that the enemy was advancing in sufficient force to prove that Lee was concentrating his whole army at Gettysburg. Therefore, without awaiting the report of Hancock, he began to move the troops to the front.¹

At 4.30 P. M., General Meade sent a despatch to Sedgwick, as follows:

¹ See map No. 10, position 2.30 P. M., July 1.

July 1, 1863, 4.30 P. M.

COMMANDING OFFICER, SIXTH CORPS:

The Major General Commanding directs that you move your command up to Taneytown to-night, your trains, except ambulances and ammunition, to Westminster and south of the railroad, as ordered. I regret to inform you that Maj. Gen'l. Reynolds was killed at Gettysburg this morning. You will inform Gen'l. Sykes of your movement, and the cavalry.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

S. WILLIAMS,

Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.

A. A. Gen'l.

About the same time that the commanding general sent the preceding order to Sedgwick, he also sent orders to the Fifth Corps, and to the Twelfth Corps, to move to Gettysburg. Six batteries of the Reserve Artillery were also ordered to Gettysburg.

About four o'clock, Hancock sent from Gettysburg a verbal message by one of his aides, Major Mitchell, which probably reached the commanding general shortly after six o'clock, explaining the situation of affairs and stating that "he would hold the ground until dark"; meaning by this, as Hancock afterward explained, in his testimony before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, to allow the commanding general time to decide the question of maintaining the position. At 5.25 P. M., Hancock sent the following written despatch by his aide, Captain Parker:

July 1, 5.25.

GENERAL:

When I arrived here an hour since, I found that our troops had given up the front of Gettysburg and the town. We have now taken up a position in the cemetery, which cannot well be taken; it is a position, however, easily turned. Slocum is now coming on the ground, and is taking position on the right, which will protect the right. But we have as yet no troops on the left, the Third Corps not having yet reported; but I suppose that it is marching up. If so, his (Sickles's) flank march will in a degree protect our left flank. In the meantime Gibbon had better march on so as to take position on our right or left, to our rear, as may be necessary, in some commanding position. Gen. G. will see this despatch. The battle is

quiet now. I think we will be all right until night. I have sent all the trains back. When night comes it can be told better what had best be done. I think we can retire; if not, we can fight here, as the ground appears not unfavorable with good troops. I will communicate in a few moments with General Slocum, and transfer the command to him.

Howard says that Doubleday's command gave way.

Your obedient servant,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,

Maj. Gen'l., Com'd'g. Corps.

General Warren is here.

At 6 P. M., probably before even Hancock's 4 P. M. verbal message had had time to reach head-quarters at Taneytown, and certainly before Hancock's 5.25 P. M. written despatch had had time to reach there, for Taneytown is thirteen miles from Gettysburg, the commanding general had sent to Hancock the following despatch:

July 1, 1863, 6 P. M.

MAJ. GEN'L. HANCOCK, and copy to

MAJ. GEN'L. DOUBLEDAY:

If General Slocum is in the field, and I hope he is, of course he takes command; say to him I thought it prudent to leave a division of the Third Corps at Emmettsburg, to hold in check any force attempting to come through there. It can be ordered up to-night, if required. It seems to me that we have so concentrated, that a battle at Gettysburg is now forced on us, and that if we can get up our people and attack with our whole force, to-morrow, we ought to defeat the force the enemy has. Six batteries of the Reserve Artillery have been sent up and more will be sent up to-morrow.

Very respectfully, etc.,

GEO. G. MEADE,

Major General, Commanding.

At 7 P. M., the commanding general sent further orders to the Fifth Corps, to urge it forward. At 7.30 P. M., he sent orders to the Sixth Corps, and to the two brigades of the Third Corps, left at Emmettsburg, to urge the forward movement to Gettysburg. Those to Sedgwick, of the Sixth Corps, were as follows:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
TANETTOWN, *July 1, 1863, 7.30 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, SIXTH CORPS:

The Major General Commanding directs me to say that a general battle seems to be impending to-morrow at Gettysburg. That it is of the utmost importance that your command should be up. He directs that you stop all trains, or turn them out of the road, that impede your progress. Your march will have to be a forced one, to reach the scene of action, where we shall be largely outnumbered without your presence. If any shorter road presents itself without difficulty in getting up, you will use your discretion in taking it, and report the facts to these headquarters. General Sykes has been ordered up from Hanover to Gettysburg, and General Slocum from Littlestown, and General Hancock's Corps from here. The whole army is there (Gettysburg), or under way for that point. The General desires you to report here in person, without delay, the moment you receive this; he is waiting to see you before going to the front. The trains will all go to Westminster and Union Bridge, as ordered.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

S. WILLIAMS,
A. A. G.

DAN'L. BUTTERFIELD,
Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.

At the same time the commanding general sent orders to the provost marshal and others to collect all stragglers and send them to the front. The trains were all sent back to Westminster, and guarded by the engineer battalion and other infantry of the army.

It had been for some hours, as evidenced by the preceding orders and dispositions, a fixed fact in the mind of the commanding general that the battle would take place at Gettysburg, so, at 6 P. M., he despatched a messenger to Frederick City, to send the following telegram to General Halleck, in Washington, apprising him of the definite conclusion that had been reached:

July 1, 1863, 6 P. M.

The First and Eleventh Corps have been engaged all day in front of Gettysburg. The Twelfth, Third and Fifth have been moving up, and all I hope, by this time on the field. This leaves only the Sixth, which will move up to-night. General Reynolds was killed this morning, early in the action. I immediately sent up General

Hancock to assume command. A. P. Hill and Ewell are certainly concentrating. Longstreet's whereabouts, I do not know. If he is not up to-morrow, I hope, with the force I have concentrated, to defeat Hill and Ewell; at any rate, I see no other course than to hazard a general battle. Circumstances during the night may alter this decision, of which I will try to advise you.

I have telegraphed Couch that if he can threaten Ewell's rear from Harrisburg, without endangering himself, to do so.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major General.

Sedgwick, in compliance with Meade's order, started soon after 7 P. M. for Taneytown, and had marched in that direction beyond the Baltimore Pike,¹ which here is the direct road to Gettysburg, when he was met by an aide, despatched to him by the commanding general, who had been awaiting his arrival at Taneytown, but who, having concluded to wait no longer, had sent this officer to instruct him not to pass through Taneytown, but to take the more direct road to Gettysburg by the way of Littlestown. Turning bridle, Sedgwick rejoined the head of his column, and after considerable difficulty and delay, owing to the narrowness of the road upon which it was then moving, countermarched it, regained the Baltimore Pike, and started on the direct road to Gettysburg through Littlestown.

Just as, shortly before ten o'clock, Meade was about starting for the front Hancock arrived and reported to him the condition of affairs up to the time of his leaving Gettysburg. Guided by Captain W. H. Paine, of the engineer staff, he then started, and notwithstanding that the night was dark and the road blocked by troops and artillery moving to the front, in fifty-seven minutes by the watch after leaving Taneytown the general reached the head-quarters of the Second Corps, a distance of between eight and nine miles. He here stopped for about fifteen minutes for consultation with General Gibbon, and gave him orders to push forward as soon as it was light. Resuming his route, it was about a quarter of twelve o'clock when he rode into the cemetery, about three and a half miles beyond where he had left Gibbon.

If the reader will place the point of a pair of dividers on the town of Gettysburg, as laid down on the map, as a centre, and with the distance from Gettysburg to Chambersburg, twenty-four miles, for

¹ Not shown on map.

radius, describe a circle, he will find that Carlisle, York, and Hagerstown lie only a short distance outside of, and about the same distance from, the circumference of the circle, and that Manchester and Westminster, seven and a half miles distant from each other, lie just inside, and each about two miles from, the circumference.

From this simple consideration, the relations to each other of the two contending armies, in their final positions and movements on Gettysburg, are clearly perceived. Ewell's dispersed corps was recalled, by Lee's orders, from the circumference of the circle toward the centre, Gettysburg. From Chambersburg, a point on the circumference itself, and the head-quarters of Lee, A. P. Hill's corps and Longstreet's corps advanced toward that centre.

Critically examining the map, we find that the line of Lee's main direction in the final advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg, and the line from Manchester to Emmettsburg, which represented the extreme right and left of Meade's advance, are parallel, although not opposite to each other, the first being to the south of east and the other necessarily to the north of west. The significance of these two advancing positions is this: Lee, still protected on his right flank by the line of the South Mountain, is issuing through them by Cashtown Pass, if we except Ewell's corps, rejoining him to the east of Cashtown Pass. Meade's necessity is to hold on, longer than anywhere else, with a force at Emmettsburg, because he cannot be sure that Lee's appearance at Cashtown is not a feint, and that, masked by the line of mountains, Lee may not issue with his main force on the left flank of the Army of the Potomac, at Emmettsburg. Meade has his right wing extended to Manchester, because Early has been over on his right as far as York. If Lee's movement on Cashtown had been a feint, and his objective point, with A. P. Hill's and Longstreet's corps, while Ewell was joining them, had been Emmettsburg, then the vicinity of Emmettsburg, or more probably the line of Pipe Creek, would have been the battle-ground, and in that event, certainly the first part of the great contest would have taken place at Emmettsburg.

Westminster, which was noted in connection with the circle drawn from Gettysburg as a centre, is, as remarked, just within the circumference. It was the place upon which the trains of the army were chiefly directed when the final advance had been ordered. Hagerstown, on the enemy's side of the mountains, and just beyond the circumference of the circle, is not far from Williamsport, on the Potomac,

his base of supplies. Meade's head-quarters, at Taneytown, had lain between Manchester and Emmettsburg, a little south of a line drawn between those two points, and a little nearer to Emmettsburg than to Manchester.

The reader has now been afforded, first, a view of the general field of operations of the campaign; and, second, a view of the smaller field of operations just before the final collision between the two armies took place.¹ It only remains that he shall become acquainted with the actual battle-ground of Gettysburg, and this will be described in connection with the operations there.

¹See Map No. 11, Lines of March from the Rappahannock to Gettysburg.

II

THE FIRST DAY

THE scene now naturally shifts back to the battle-field at Gettysburg, where Reynolds, just arrived, had immediately despatched an aide-de-camp to the commanding general with the urgent message which has been already given.

One thing is obvious from the consideration of an incidental mention in this message: that Reynolds had seen at a glance that the position finally obtained by the Federal army was that which ought to be secured. And the inference, moreover, is unavoidable, that he thought dispositions on the field should be made with reference to safe retirement to the heights of Cemetery Hill and Ridge. In the situation, however, that was to be instantaneously met, as he reached the field, the only thing to be done was to put in the arriving troops wherever they could be placed, in order to stem the tide of the advancing Confederates.

For details of the battle-ground of the three following days the reader must of course resort to the map.¹ But a good general idea of the ground can be obtained by regarding, as before, the town of Gettysburg as a centre, and forming one's notions of directions and accidents of surface by regarding them as seen from that centre. Facing the north, thence, we may define the general shape of the battle-ground as rudely representing a parallelogram, four and a half miles long by two and a half wide, the long sides of it lying north and south, the short sides east and west, the spectator in the town of Gettysburg occupying the middle of it, taking it from east to west, and about one-fourth of its length from the north, taking it from north to south. Two creeks, Rock Creek and Willoughby Run, flow, as to their general direction, north and south along the east and west sides of this parallelogram. Their direction may be more nearly particularized by saying that Rock Creek, taken due east of the centre of Gettysburg, is three-quarters of a mile distant, and that Willoughby Run, taken due west of the centre of Gettysburg, is a mile

¹ See Map No. 12, The Battle-field.

and a quarter distant, making the distance between them at Gettysburg two miles; and that, from these points, the creeks, in flowing the three miles and a half to the end of the battle-field, at the south diverge from this width of two miles apart at the north to a width apart of three miles and a half.

Now, again assuming the centre of Gettysburg as the point from which to view in imagination the movements of the contending armies, through the convergence of roads at the town, we find that, coming from Cashtown, Lee (A. P. Hill's and Longstreet's corps) marched on Gettysburg by the Chambersburg Pike, southeast; and that Ewell and Early, coming from Carlisle and York to reinforce Lee, marched on the town by the Carlisle Road, due south, and by the Harrisburg Road, south of southwest.

Meade's troops advanced toward the town by the Emmetsburg Pike, north of northeast; by the Taneytown Road, west of north; by the Baltimore Pike, northwest; and by the Hanover Road, west of northwest.

It now only remains to add that on the line of a semicircle, rudely described, north of Gettysburg from the centre of Gettysburg, taking in the slopes rising from Rock Creek and Willoughby Run and across the Carlisle Road, the battle of the first day was waged. The position of the Army of the Potomac where the battle was finally delivered (to which, of course, the Confederate position was generally conformable), was along the high ground running south of southwest from Gettysburg for three miles, ending with Big and Little Round Tops; a line making, inclusive of a sharp turn to the eastward of about a mile in length at the cemetery, and inclusive also of the flexures in the hills, a position of over four miles in length for the Federal line of battle. Beyond this reference the reader could glean nothing from a general description of the ground, and must refer for details to the map, in conjunction with a study of the separate movements in battle.

Wadsworth's division, Cutler's brigade leading, left the Emmetsburg Road about two miles from Gettysburg, and double-quicking across the fields in a northwesterly direction, reached Seminary Ridge, relieving Buford's tired troopers, who by hard fighting had, alone, thus far successfully disputed the enemy's advance. Three regiments of Cutler's brigade were rapidly put in line, on the right of the Chambersburg Road, across the old railroad cut.² The

¹ Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.

² See Map No. 13, July 1, 10 A. M.

other two regiments of the brigade were placed by Reynolds on the left of the Chambersburg Road, in support of Hall's Second Maine Battery. Cutler at once became hotly engaged.

It was now ten o'clock. Meredith's brigade was formed as it came up, on the left of the Chambersburg Road, and under Reynolds's immediate direction moved forward into a strip of woods on the ridge parallel to and in front of Seminary Ridge through which the enemy was advancing, charged, and drove him back across Willoughby Run. Two of Meredith's regiments (the Nineteenth Indiana and the Twenty-fourth Michigan) were thrown across the run, enveloping Archer's brigade of A. P. Hill's corps. Archer and the greater part of his brigade were captured by this well-executed movement.

At the moment of Meredith's advance, Reynolds, who was directing the movement, was killed, shot through the head. Never, perhaps, has a general fallen in battle at a more momentous time; never, perhaps, at such a crisis, has a command passed from an extraordinary soldier to one so inferior to him. Doubleday, to whom that command fell by seniority, was brave, and capable enough for ordinary emergencies; but this emergency was extraordinary, and the soldier to whom he succeeded was without a peer in the army. He was of the stuff of which marshals of France were made when every soldier carried the baton in his knapsack. Still, it is no disparagement of the other that the same cannot be said of him.

Doubleday, who had appeared upon the field in advance of his division before Reynolds was killed, and had received orders from Reynolds as to what portion of it he should direct, was now separated from Reynolds, and consequently was not for some time aware of the death of his chief, and that he had thus become the ranking officer on the field.

Cutler's three regiments, on the right of the road, were opposed by the whole of Davis's brigade. Finding themselves, after a short but sharp fight, outnumbered and outflanked, they were ordered to retire. They at first gradually fell back to Seminary Ridge, and then still further to the rear. The retiring of this brigade left Hall's battery, posted to its front and left, and already heavily engaged in a very exposed position, and the right of Meredith's brigade as well, of which opportunities Davis took immediate advantage. Freed now from opposition on his front, he turned his attention to this battery, and after subjecting it to a very severe fire, killing many men and horses, rushed forward to capture it. Hall, now endeavoring to

retire and save it, accomplished his purpose, except in the case of one piece, of which all the horses were killed and many of the men killed and wounded.

Just at this critical moment the Sixth Wisconsin, of Meredith's brigade, which had, up to this time, been in reserve, appeared on the scene, and being joined by the Ninety-fifth New York and the Fourteenth Brooklyn, two of the regiments which had acted as the support to the battery, they together made a gallant charge, recovered Hall's gun, and drove the advancing enemy across and into the railroad cut, capturing some three hundred men belonging to Mississippi regiments of Davis's brigade. This brilliant dash maintained that portion of the field.

In the meantime Meredith's brigade had been recalled to the hither side of the run and reformed in line. Cutler's brigade was now ordered forward with those of his regiments which had fallen back, and his brigade, reunited, was reformed, occupying to the right of the road the ground where the fight had begun. Stewart's First United States Artillery was also brought up and posted on Cutler's line.

About eleven o'clock Doubleday's division came upon the field and at once took position, Stone's brigade in the interval between Cutler and Meredith, and Biddle's brigade, with Cooper's First Pennsylvania Battery, on the left of Meredith, Gamble's brigade of cavalry being deployed on Biddle's left. Robinson's division, following Doubleday's, was placed in reserve near the seminary.

The attack of Archer and Davis had signally failed. Archer, as has been said, had been captured, with many of his men, and the brigade driven back. Davis's brigade had suffered so severely, had been so badly cut up and scattered, that it could not be again brought into action until late in the day.

Heth, bringing up the brigades of Pettigrew and Brockenborough, with the remnants of Archer's brigade, formed a new line on his right of the Chambersburg Road, and awaited further orders. There was now a lull in the action until after one o'clock.¹

It was verging toward one o'clock when the head of the column of the Eleventh Corps reached Gettysburg, Schurz's division, then commanded by Schimmelfennig, leading. This division was advanced through the town into the open country beyond, to the north, with orders to form line of battle on the right of the First Corps.

¹ See Map No. 14, July 1, 11 A. M.

Howard, with the Eleventh Corps, had left the vicinity of Emmettsburg about 8.30 A. M., under orders from Reynolds to march to Gettysburg. Barlow's division of the corps followed the route of the First Corps, while the divisions of Schurz and Von Steinwehr took a road which would bring them into Gettysburg by the Taneytown Road. After seeing his column started, Howard rode ahead to Gettysburg. On his way he received from Reynolds news of the engagement and orders to hasten forward with the corps. Sending back these orders to the advancing divisions of the corps, Howard again hastened forward, arriving at Gettysburg at about eleven o'clock. Shortly after his arrival he was notified of the death of Reynolds, and became aware that he was the senior officer on the field.

During the lull in the conflict that had taken place between eleven and one o'clock General A. P. Hill, with Pender's division, had arrived by the Chambersburg Road. Having been apprised of the approach of Ewell from the north, he ordered Heth to advance at once and attack with his whole line, notifying him that Pender would support him.

Ewell, with Rodes's division, had passed the night of June 30 at Heidlersburg, and had moved on the morning of July 1, under orders to march toward Cashtown. Before reaching Middletown, however, he had received word from A. P. Hill, that he was moving toward Gettysburg. Ewell, therefore, turned the head of Rodes's column for that place by the way of the Middletown Road, and sent word to Early to advance by the Heidlersburg Road.¹

Upon arriving near the field Rodes found that, by keeping along the ridge, which is here a prolongation of Seminary Ridge, he could strike in flank the force opposed to Hill. Accordingly, he formed his line facing due south, with Iverson's brigade on the right, O'Neill's in the centre, and Doles's on the left, with Daniels and Ramseur in reserve. He continued along with this formation until he arrived at Oak Hill, a commanding point from which he had a full view of the First Corps's line. Rodes then advanced his batteries and opened fire on Cutler's troops. Having his own troops in position, and deeming the opportunity favorable, he ordered Iverson and O'Neill to advance. To meet this advance Cutler moved further to the right, and swinging back his right, soon became hotly engaged. As Rodes continued to press and overlap him, Baxter's brigade, of Robinson's division, Robinson himself accompanying it, was hastened over from

¹ Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.

the seminary to his assistance and formed on his right, extending to the Mummasburg Road.

As the afternoon passed, and Rodes's efforts to break the Federal line increased, and the fighting became in consequence more and more desperate, Paul's brigade was also brought up and disposed partly in support of Baxter, and partly on his right.

Now was the time, when the enemy was appearing on Oak Hill, that the Eleventh Corps came upon the immediate field, Schurz, directed by Howard to assume command of the corps, moving his own division, under Schimmelfennig, to the right of the First Corps. Before, however, Schurz had had time to occupy Oak Hill, on his left and front, Rodes's division had seized it and was advancing. Schimmelfennig therefore deployed his division in the open fields, facing it north, to the right of the First Corps. His line, however, did not extend far enough to connect with the right of that corps, quite a wide interval intervening between the two bodies of troops. On his left was placed Dilger's First Ohio Battery, and a little later that was reinforced by the addition of Wheeler's Thirteenth New York Independent Battery, brought up on the right of Dilger. Barlow's division, which had arrived by the Emmetsburg Pike, marched through the town of Gettysburg, and took position on the right of Schimmelfennig, Von Gilsa's small brigade, with Battery G of the Fourth United States Artillery, being advanced to a small wooded eminence near Rock Creek, Ames's brigade remaining in reserve. Devins's cavalry, up to this time disputing the advance of Rodes, and now relieved by the advance of the Eleventh Corps, fell back to the right of the York Road, covering that approach.

Von Steinwehr's division, of the Eleventh Corps, remains to be accounted for. As it had arrived to the southward of Gettysburg, it had, by direction of General Howard, been turned off to the right and stationed, with Wiedrich's New York battery, on the heights in front of the cemetery, just south of the town.

To return now to the First Corps, on the left of the line: Heth, on receiving the order from Hill to attack, advanced his whole line, Brockenborough on the left, Pettigrew in the centre, and Archer on the right. Archer was soon compelled to change front to the right, on account of the active demonstrations of Gamble's troopers, and Brockenborough encountered such a determined resistance from Stone and Meredith that he made no headway. But Pettigrew, although not without hard fighting and suffering heavy loss, was more suc-

cessful. Biddle's line opposed his; but, although far outnumbered and greatly outflanked on the left, Biddle maintained his position with spirit for a long time, under a severe front and flank fire, when he was compelled to retire, a movement which he executed slowly, to a partial cover close to the seminary. In this advance Heth himself was wounded.

On the right of the First Corps the fighting had been equally desperate with that on the left. O'Neill's brigade had, upon receiving the order to assault, advanced in such irregular formation as to make his attack so ineffective that he was almost immediately hurled back and attacked in turn by Robinson, his troops scattered, and many prisoners taken.

About this time Cutler's brigade, being entirely out of ammunition, and the men exhausted by the day's encounters, was withdrawn from the field.

Iverson, on O'Neill's right, had, in moving forward, swung around his right until he faced in a southeasterly direction. Baxter, being now relieved on his front by the repulse of O'Neill, which had uncovered Iverson's left, promptly changed front and furiously assaulted Iverson, driving him back with fearful slaughter. Iverson's change of direction had uncovered the front of Daniels, who was following on his right and rear. In consequence Daniels moved directly forward until he reached the railroad cut. There Stone, who had refused his right, so that it was then facing north, obstinately resisted Daniels. Daniels managed to get possession of the railroad cut, but was unable to gain any further advantage. Baxter's brigade was now withdrawn, and for a time remained on the eastern slope of Seminary Ridge, north of the Chambersburg Road in support of Stewart's battery. Ramseur now advanced and, with the remnants of Iverson's and O'Neill's brigades, prepared to attack the right flank of the First Corps.

The movements of Schimmelfennig had caused Rodes to extend Doles's brigade further to the left, in order to protect that flank, and also to connect with Early's division, coming on the field by the Heidlersburg Road.¹ Early arrived at 2.30 p. m. and formed line of battle on some wooded hills across Rock Creek; Hays's brigade in the centre, Gordon's on the right, and Avery's on the left, with Smith in reserve. The artillery of this division, placed in position south of the Harrisburg Road, opened fire and enfiladed

¹ Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.

Barlow's line. Ames was brought up and placed on the left of Von Gilsa.

At 1 P. M. Howard had sent a despatch to Sickles, at Emmettsburg, urging him to come up. A little later he had sent to Slocum a message, stating how hard they were pressed, and calling for assistance. At 2 P. M., just before this period of the fight that we have reached, he reported to the commanding general:¹

HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH CORPS, *July 1, 2 P. M.*

GEN. MEADE:

The First Corps came in position in front of town—two divisions of the Eleventh Corps on the right of the town, one division, Eleventh Corps in reserve.

Enemy reported to be advancing from York (Ewell's corps)—the First and Eleventh Corps were engaged with Hill's forces.

Have ordered General Sickles to push forward.

O. O. HOWARD,

M. G.

As Doles was attacking Schimmelfennig in front, Gordon's brigade advanced across Rock Creek, and, in joining Doles, attacked Barlow's right. Von Gilsa's brigade, being hard pressed, after a brief resistance fell back in great disorder, the men pouring through Ames's regiment, and causing much confusion. Barlow was desperately wounded, and his division fell back, leaving him a prisoner in the hands of the enemy.

Doles was equally successful with Schimmelfennig. The whole line of the Eleventh Corps gave way. There was an attempt to rally, some four or five hundred yards to the rear, near the county almshouse,² but Hays and Hoke, having crossed Rock Creek, south of the Harrisburg Road, took the Federals in flank, and they, being pressed in front by Gordon and Doles, made but a brief stand, and continued to retreat pell-mell to the town.

Dilger's, Wheeler's, and Wilkeson's batteries had rendered excellent service throughout the engagement. Lieutenant Wilkeson had been mortally wounded early in the day. When the infantry fell back, the three batteries were by skilful handling safely retired, fighting their guns in retreat to Cemetery Hill, one of Wheeler's guns, only on account of its being disabled, being left on the field.

¹See Map No. 15, July 1, 2.30 P. M., No. 2.

²Not shown on map.

It was now half-past three o'clock. Before the retreat Howard had sent word to Schurz to fall back, but this order was not received until the corps was in full retreat. At the same time that Howard had sent this order he had advanced as support Coster's brigade, of Von Steinwehr's division. This brigade, with Heckman's Ohio battery, was advanced just northeast of the town, between the Harrisburg Road and the Hanover Railroad. They were able, however, to retard the enemy's advance only sufficiently to enable the shattered remains of the rest of the Eleventh Corps to take refuge behind them, when they, in turn, to avoid being enveloped, were compelled to retire, Heckman losing two of his guns.

During this onslaught on the Eleventh Corps, which had just terminated so disastrously, the First Corps had maintained its position against the most vigorous attacks, from Heth in front and from Rodes on the right. Robinson, after a magnificent defence, now, on account of his right being uncovered by the rout of the Eleventh Corps, and, as well, furiously attacked on front and left, received orders to withdraw.

The time of day was half-past three in the afternoon. Heth's division, now out of ammunition, and thoroughly exhausted by almost continuous fighting since ten o'clock in the morning, was relieved by Pender's division. Pender promptly advanced his three brigades in line, Lane's on the right, Perrin's in the centre, and Scales's on the left, all south of the Chambersburg Road, the other brigade of this division, Thomas's, being held in reserve as a support to the artillery. Lane had not advanced far before he was compelled to concentrate his attention on Gamble's cavalry brigade, which, well extended to the left, thus threatened the right flank of the advancing line. Scales, on the left, passing Brockenborough's troops, came into action by vigorously attacking Stone and Meredith.

By this time Doubleday had withdrawn his line to the seminary, collecting the batteries of the corps, to make there the last stand under which to cover the withdrawal of the rest of the First Corps from the field. Stone and Meredith, in conjunction with the batteries, opened such a murderous fire upon Scales that his brigade was almost annihilated and he himself wounded. Of Scales's brigade, but five hundred men and one field officer were left.

Perrin's brigade, advancing beyond Pettigrew, attacked Biddle, who, after a gallant resistance, was compelled to relinquish his position.

The check to Scales had, however, enabled all the batteries to retire. But Perrin still continuing to press on, the order to abandon Seminary Hill was given. Scales, although badly wounded, collected the fragments of his brigade, and joining Perrin's, still pressed on, when the Federal line, now attacked in front and on both flanks, fell back toward Gettysburg. Perrin continued to pursue to the town, where he halted, having captured one gun, belonging to Reynolds's New York battery.

Lane, still beset by Gamble, had been unable to take any part in this last attack, and had to content himself with slowly pushing Gamble back to the cover of the guns on Cemetery Hill. Gamble was here joined by Devins, whom Buford had moved over from the right of the town.

General Paul, commanding the First Brigade of Robinson's division of the First Corps, had been badly wounded in one of the attacks on the right of the First Corps. He was succeeded by Colonel Leonard, of the Thirteenth Massachusetts, and he by Colonel Root, of the Ninety-fourth New York, and he again, by the time the brigade had reached Cemetery Hill, by Colonel Coulter, of the Eleventh Pennsylvania, belonging to the Second Brigade of the division; all but Colonel Coulter being wounded. Similarly, Colonel Stone, of the Second Brigade, Third Division, had been wounded early in the fight, and was succeeded by Colonel Wister, of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Pennsylvania, who was wounded very shortly afterward, and succeeded by Colonel Dana, of the One Hundred and Forty-third Pennsylvania Regiment.

Pender's division was collected and halted outside of the town, and between four and five o'clock Anderson's division, of A. P. Hill's corps, came up and bivouacked about a mile to the rear of the battle-field.

It was just before this issue of the conflict that Buford sent his well-known despatch to Pleasanton, who was with the commanding general at Taneytown. It is timed 3.20 P. M. In it he said:

"I am satisfied that Longstreet and Hill have made a junction. A tremendous battle has been raging since nine and a half A. M., with varying success. At the present moment the battle is raging on the road to Cashtown, and in short cannon range of this town; the enemy's line is a semicircle on the height from north to west. General Reynolds was killed early this morning. In my opinion there seems to be no directing person.—We need help now."

Not until the Eleventh Corps, on its right, had entirely given way, was it that the First Corps was obliged to seek safety in retreat. It was about 4 P. M. when the whole line was abandoned, the corps sullenly retiring toward Gettysburg, and turning at every favorable opportunity to check the too eager advance of the enemy. As the corps reached the town it necessarily became involved with the confused masses of the routed Eleventh Corps, and in consequence of this, the confusion naturally increasing, as the enemy were pressing forward on all sides, many prisoners were taken.

In this state of affairs, at nearly 4 P. M., when the whole of the positions previously occupied by the Federals had been abandoned, and when the troops from the First and Eleventh Corps were surging through the streets of Gettysburg, Hancock arrived upon the field at the cemetery. He had, after receiving the verbal and written orders of the commanding general, ridden direct from Taneytown.

The sight which met his gaze upon his arrival at Cemetery Hill was, on the immediate ground, Smith's brigade, of Von Steinwehr's division, well posted, with Weidrich's battery, of the Eleventh Corps, along the crest of the hill. To the northward and westward, on the plain below, a half-mile distant, stretched the line of battle of Buford's dismounted cavalry, interposing between the advancing enemy's right wing, and presenting such a firm front to the enemy as to cause him on that part of the field to desist from his pursuit of the broken ranks of infantry. Beyond, to the north of Gettysburg, stretching toward Cemetery Hill, came the remnants of the Eleventh Corps, intermingled with some of the troops from the First Corps, who, until they had become entangled in the streets of the town with the disorganized masses of the Eleventh, had preserved the orderliness of their retreat.

Hancock promptly addressed himself to the task of restoring order and forming a strong line of battle on the crest of Cemetery Hill. In this he was materially assisted by the exertions of Howard, Buford, and Warren, who, lately arrived upon the ground, rendered invaluable aid in stopping stragglers and directing them upon the formation of a line. Around Smith's brigade, as a nucleus, the rest of the Eleventh Corps was, through desperate efforts on the part of all the officers present, finally concentrated in line on the north and west faces of the extremity of Cemetery Hill. Robinson's and Double-

day's divisions were posted on the left of the Eleventh Corps, on the continuation to the south on Cemetery Ridge.

Hancock, perceiving signs among the enemy of the movement of a line of battle on the east, and recognizing the importance of the possession of Culp's Hill, to the east of Cemetery Hill, as a position, on account of its commanding the approaches from Gettysburg and communications along the Baltimore Pike and elsewhere, sent Wadsworth's division to occupy it. The batteries of the two corps were skilfully planted in positions along the line now occupied from Culp's Hill around by the way of the point of Cemetery Hill, down along its west side, and along its continuation as Cemetery Ridge. These dispositions, taken together with the fire of the batteries, which opened whenever the enemy made any show of advancing, presented a sufficiently formidable front to deter him from attempting any serious demonstration.

At 5 P. M. Howard sent the following despatch to the commanding general:

HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH CORPS, *July 1, 5 P. M.*

First. Gen. Reynolds attacked the enemy as soon as he arrived, with one division, about 10.45 o'clock, A. M. He moved to the front of the town, driving in the enemy's advance for about half a mile, when he met with a strong force of A. P. Hill's corps. I pushed up as fast as I could by a parallel road; placed my corps in position on his right. General Reynolds was killed at eleven and a quarter A. M. I assumed command of the two corps and sent word to Slocum and Sickles to move up. I have fought the enemy from that time to this. The First Corps fell back, when outflanked on its left, to a stronger position, when the Eleventh Corps was ordered back also, to a stronger position. General Hancock arrived at 4 P. M., and communicated his intentions. I am still holding on at this time. Slocum is near, but will not come up to assume command.

O. O. HOWARD.

Slocum had arrived with the Twelfth Corps, at 11 A. M., at a small place on the Baltimore Pike, called Two Taverns, about five miles from Gettysburg. Here he had halted his command to await further instructions. Finally, about 2 P. M., upon receipt of Howard's urgent calls for assistance, he started his column in the direction of Gettysburg. Williams's division, which was in advance, was,

just before reaching Rock Creek, directed to the right by a cross-road to the Hanover Road, and to prepare to attack the enemy's left, moving from the east against the troops of the Eleventh Corps, supposed to be still in front of Gettysburg. He had marched for some distance in the direction indicated, when he was recalled, intelligence having been received that the Federal troops had relinquished the town. Williams therefore countermarched to near the crossing of Rock Creek by the Baltimore Pike, and there bivouacked.

Geary's division, of the Twelfth Corps, which had followed Williams on the Baltimore Pike, continued its way along the pike to and over the crossing at Rock Creek, still following the pike, which abuts on the very rear of Cemetery Hill. Arrived there, about 5 p. m., Geary reported to Hancock with two of his brigades, his third brigade having been, by order of Slocum, left as a reserve on the right. Hancock thereupon directed him to take his command over to the left of the First Corps, to occupy and prolong the line along Cemetery Ridge. Geary, in obedience to these directions, posted his division along Cemetery Ridge, from the left of the First Corps to Little Round Top, up the slope of which he placed two regiments of the First Brigade—the Fifth Ohio and the One Hundred and Forty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Slocum, in person, did not arrive at Cemetery Hill until 6 p. m., and being the senior officer on the field, Hancock turned over the command to him, and everything being now quiet, started for Taneytown, to report to the commanding general. He arrived at Meade's head-quarters just as the general was starting for the front.

It has been mentioned that, at one o'clock, Howard had sent an urgent message to Sickles, at Emmettsburg, to push on as rapidly as possible to Gettysburg. This message did not reach Sickles until three o'clock. He at once responded to the summons, leaving two brigades to guard the approaches to Emmettsburg, and moving with the rest of his corps toward Gettysburg. Birney, with two brigades of his division, arrived at Cemetery Ridge about 6 p. m., and was massed to the rear of the ridge, between it and the Taneytown Road. Humphreys's division, owing to the fact that it had been put on the wrong road by a staff officer of Sickles's, did not reach the ridge until one o'clock in the morning of the following day.

General Lee reached Seminary Ridge about half-past four in the afternoon, just as the Federal troops were retreating through the town of Gettysburg, taking position on the hills beyond. He then

learned from prisoners and other sources that he had been engaged with two corps of the Army of the Potomac, and that the other corps, under General Meade, were approaching. Ignorant of the exact position of the rest of the Army of the Potomac, he concluded that, with the force of only four divisions, which were all the troops he had then present, and these weary from a long and bloody struggle, he ought not to hazard attacking the Federals in the strong position which they occupied on Cemetery Hill. He, however, instructed Ewell, whose troops were in the best condition of any, and occupying the best position, to carry Cemetery Hill, if possible, but not to run the risk of bringing on a general engagement before the arrival of the rest of the army.

Ewell came to the conclusion that, from his position, Cemetery Hill could not be carried, and as his troops were very much fatigued by their long march and day's fighting, he decided to await the arrival of his Third Division, Johnson's, which was reported to be near at hand, and with it capture Culp's Hill, which commanded Cemetery Hill, and which seemed unoccupied.

Johnson's division had passed the night of the 30th at Greenwood, and had moved forward during the day by the road thence to Gettysburg. Before Johnson could get into position, however, it was reported to Ewell that the enemy (probably Slocum's command) was moving on his left flank, and by the time that the report could be sifted the night had so far advanced that he relinquished his purpose of attempting to occupy Culp's Hill. Johnson, however, sent to the hill a reconnoitring party, which was attacked by Wadsworth's troops and driven away, many prisoners being captured.

During the evening Smith's brigade, of Early's division, which was posted some distance out on the York Road, reported that a body of Federal troops was approaching by that road. Early therefore despatched Gordon's brigade to keep a lookout in that direction. During the night some of this command captured an orderly bearing a despatch from Sykes to Slocum, timed midnight, stating that he was four miles from Gettysburg, and would start for that place at four o'clock in the morning.

Thus closed the first day of the battle.

The general result of the day's operations had been decidedly in favor of the Confederates. The positions of the corps of the respective armies at the time when the approach of the Army of the Potomac became known to Lee had rendered it possible for him to

issue such orders looking to final concentration as to enable him more speedily than lay within the power of his opponent to make that final concentration. The difference was not great; it was slight, in time, but it was appreciable in the results of the first day's contest. Before dark of July 1 he had fully two-thirds of his army present on the field. That portion of his force which had been present during the day had far outnumbered the force opposed to it. It consisted of seventeen brigades of infantry, fifteen of which, with seventeen batteries of artillery, had been engaged. Of the Army of the Potomac there were present twelve brigades of infantry, two brigades of cavalry, and eleven batteries of artillery, of which eleven brigades of infantry, the two brigades of cavalry, and all the batteries of artillery had been engaged.

Despite the superiority of his force, the enemy had only after a prolonged struggle, suffering great loss in killed and wounded, driven the Federal troops from their advanced position, and had compelled them to take refuge on the heights beyond the town of Gettysburg. On the left of the Federal line, the First Corps had for a long time maintained its position with such tenacity as to inflict greater loss than it sustained. This, too, to its honor be it said, it managed to do notwithstanding the untimely death of Reynolds, at the very beginning of the conflict—a loss irreparable as to command of the field, and also well calculated to impair the *morale* of any troops. No better evidence can exist as to the discipline, bravery, and determination of that corps than that, under the circumstances of repeated and prolonged assaults upon it by superior numbers, and of the loss of its accomplished leader, it undauntedly maintained its position, receiving and repulsing attack after attack from ten o'clock in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon, and even taking the initiative when opportunity was afforded. Not until this fighting had been nearly continuous for hours, until fresh troops were brought forward to oppose it, not until both its flanks were enveloped and its line of retreat seriously endangered, did this heroic corps abandon its last position. It was only in the retreat from the position on Seminary Hill that, through its entanglement in the streets of Gettysburg with the fragments of the Eleventh Corps, its loss in prisoners took place.

In considering the indubitable fact of the rout of the Eleventh Corps, it would be unfair not to take into consideration the many disadvantages under which it labored. Most unfavorably situated

as to position, with the greater portion of its troops stretched across an open plain, with little or no advantage for defence from the character of the ground, it was hurried into action before its lines were thoroughly formed. Under these circumstances it was not capable of making the organized resistance which, otherwise, it might, under more favorable auspices, have opposed to the advance of the enemy.

The Confederates, on their part, had fought with their usual courage and pertinacity. Being the attacking force, their losses in their repeated onslaughts on the Federal lines must have been very great. It is impossible to ascertain the exact amount of their losses. What is positively known, however, is that the brigades of Archer, Davis, O'Neill, Iverson, and Scales were, after the fight, mere skeletons of their previous organizations. That their success was not more fruitful of results was owing to the gallant stand made by the First Corps, to the promptness with which the line was re-established by Hancock on Cemetery Hill, and to Lee's ignorance of the exact position of the corps of the enemy that were still moving to the point of concentration.

It is desirable here to glance at the positions of the respective armies at midnight, between July 1 and July 2.¹

Of the Army of the Potomac there were in position, on Cemetery Hill and Ridge, and on Culp's Hill, the First Corps, including Stan-
nard's Vermont Brigade (which, during the evening, had joined the corps after a forced march from the defences of Washington), the Eleventh Corps, the Twelfth Corps, and two brigades of one division (Birney's) of the Third Corps. Out on the plain, and stretching away parallel with Cemetery Ridge, were the lines of the two brigades of cavalry of the ever-watchful and tireless Buford.² The remaining division of the Third Corps (Humphreys's) was making the best of its way, through the darkness of the night, on the road to Gettysburg, and was happily now near at hand. The Second Corps was on the Taneytown Road, about three miles from Gettysburg, where it had been halted by Hancock, to protect the left and rear, when he went in person to make his final report to the commanding general. The Fifth Corps was four miles back on the Hanover Road, at Bonaughtown, making a brief halt after its long march, and only waiting for the dawn to push onward to the front. The Sixth

¹See Map No. 16, July 1, 12 P. M.

²The cavalry situations are not shown on maps, owing to their varied and extended positions.

Corps was some hours out from Manchester, hastening along on its ever-memorable forced march to reach their comrades in battle.

Merritt's cavalry brigade, of Buford's division, was still in the neighborhood of Mechanicstown, scouting the country in that direction. Gregg was at Hanover, with two brigades of cavalry, having sent the Third Brigade (Huey's) back to Westminster, to assist in guarding the wagon trains of the army, now being collected there. Kilpatrick, after his encounter with Stuart, at Hanover, had followed him as far as Berlin, but failing to come up with him, had returned to Abbottstown, where Kilpatrick now was. Tyler, with the Reserve Artillery, except those batteries which had already gone forward by order of the commanding general, was on the road from Taneytown to Gettysburg, in the rear of the Second Corps. General Meade had just arrived on Cemetery Hill.

On the Confederate side, in the immediate vicinity of the town of Gettysburg, with a partial formation confronting Cemetery Hill and the adjacent ground, were Ewell's corps and A. P. Hill's corps. McLaw's division, and Hood's division, of Longstreet's corps, except Law's brigade of the latter, which had been left on picket duty at New Guilford, were at the crossing of the Chambersburg Road over Marsh Creek. Pickett's division of this corps had remained at Chambersburg, guarding the rear. General Lee was encamped on Seminary Ridge, near the Chambersburg Pike, laying his plans for the morrow.

In following the movements of Stuart, who had been making a cavalry raid from the rear around the right flank of the Army of the Potomac, we had left him, after his engagement with the cavalry under Kilpatrick, in which he had been forced to fall back from the town of Hanover, embarrassed with his captured wagons, and with his direct road to the north obstructed by Kilpatrick, hastening, as well as his jaded horses would permit, toward Jefferson, intending to go thence in the direction of York, and hoping ultimately to fall in with the column of Early.

This, as will be remembered, was on the night of June 30. His objective point was, of course, the army of Lee, but between it and himself interposed the Army of the Potomac, and to make matters still more serious for him, the cavalry force of Kilpatrick was proving an obstacle in his path. It was an urgent necessity with him to be able, if possible, to join some of the infantry composing Lee's army, with which, uniting himself, he could thenceforward proceed with

safety. Early, according to the best information which he could obtain, had left York and was marching to what Stuart had heard was Lee's point of concentration, at Shippensburg, but he hoped to intercept some portion of Ewell's force and accompany it to the main army. With this purpose in view, he deemed that the best plan for him to accomplish it would be to push on from Jefferson to Carlisle. On the morning of July 1 he arrived at Dover. Passing through Dillstown, he reached Carlisle on the afternoon of July 1, only to find all Ewell's troops gone and the town occupied by a Federal force under General W. F. Smith, who had been sent forward from Harrisburg by General Couch.

Stuart was by this time short of supplies, and both men and horses were thoroughly worn out from constant marching. Carlisle seemed to present an inviting opportunity of obtaining rations for his troops, of which he was not slow to attempt to avail himself. But, unfortunately for him, the presence of the force under Smith at once presented a serious obstacle to his intentions. He demanded the surrender of the town, but this being refused, he proceeded to shell it by way of enforcing compliance with his demands. While thus engaged, his operations were brought to an abrupt close by the receipt during the evening of a despatch from Lee, stating that the army was at Gettysburg, and had been engaged all day with the enemy, and ordering him to move his command at once for that place. Then, burning the barracks, which lay just outside of the town of Carlisle, Stuart at once turned his column in the direction of Gettysburg.

III

THE SECOND DAY

Just before midnight General Meade, entering at the rear of the little cemetery on Cemetery Hill, rode down its main drive, and dismounted at the little, old-fashioned lodge that stands at its entrance on the Baltimore Pike. Here were assembled General Slocum, who had been in command of the field since Hancock had left it, Generals Howard, Sickles, Warren, and other officers. From them he received reports of the condition of affairs since Hancock's departure. Learning, in answer to his inquiry, that the position was considered a good one, he replied that he was glad to hear it, for it was now too late to leave it. He then notified the generals assembled that the whole army was on the march to Gettysburg, and, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, should be there by early morning.

Shortly afterward the general, accompanied by one or two officers, walked out beyond the Baltimore Pike, among the batteries posted on the brow of Cemetery Hill. Although it was too dark to distinguish individual objects at a distance, still he could see, looking toward the north and west, the general line of the camp-fires of the enemy's troops. The general position in the first day's battle of his own troops and of those of the enemy was pointed out to him. Silently gazing out into the stillness of the night, broken only by the voices of his companions, the growl of some tired soldier as he changed his uneasy position on the ground, or by the occasional ping of the bullet fired by some restless spirit along the picket line, the general, as he planned for the morrow's struggle, doubtless reverted in mind to the trusted friend, fallen at the beginning of that day's fight on the soil of his native State, of the soldier-friend, whose untimely death had cost ten thousand men upon whom he could no longer count.

It was too dark to obtain a clear idea of the ground occupied by that portion of the army which had reached the field. General Meade therefore returned to the cemetery, where he addressed himself to the task of making preparations for the next day. Before, however, it had yet become daylight, he mounted his horse, and ac-

accompanied by Generals Howard and Hunt, and by Captain Paine, of the engineer staff, rode off to examine the lines. Riding slowly along in rear of the sleeping line of soldiers around Cemetery Hill, and along its continuation as Cemetery Ridge, and beyond, to where the land dips before it rises abruptly at the base of Little Round Top, he obtained a general knowledge of the features of the ground and of the chief accidents of its surface. As it was still dark when he had started along the lines, of course only the most salient features of the ground could be recognized. Before, however, he had finished the examination, day began to break, and he concluded it by an inspection of the right, around Culp's Hill, to the crossing of Rock Creek by the Baltimore Pike. He finally indicated on Captain Paine's sketch of the ground just gone over the position to be held by each corps, and Captain Paine thereupon, by his orders, made from the sketch, and during the morning transmitted to each corps, a tracing showing the positions. The general, after having settled upon the positions to be occupied by the respective corps, sent General Hunt for the second time to examine the lines, in order to make sure that the artillery was everywhere properly posted.

A little farm-house on the western side of the Taneytown Road, directly in rear of Cemetery Ridge, had been selected for permanent head-quarters. Near by here, between six and seven o'clock in the morning, as General Meade was seated on horseback in a field on the east side of the Taneytown Road, somewhat below the house, General Gibbon rode up, just in advance of the head of the column of the Second Corps, and reported the presence of the corps. He was instructed by General Meade to place the corps in position on Cemetery Ridge, which was pointed out, extending the line toward Round Top, and was informed that the Third Corps would connect with his left. This formation brought the right of the Second Corps on the Taneytown Road, connecting with the left of the Eleventh Corps, at a clump of woods known as Ziegler's Grove,¹ thus relieving the divisions of Robinson and Doubleday, of the First Corps, which had during the night been occupying this line. These two divisions were then posted in rear of Cemetery Hill, in support of the Eleventh Corps. While the Second Corps was getting into position, General Hancock, just returned from Taneytown, arrived on the field and resumed command of his corps.

The position of General Sickles, commanding the Third Corps,

¹ Not shown on map.

was indicated to him in two specific ways—to relieve the division of General Geary, by occupying the line upon which he had been posted the night before by General Hancock; and to connect his right with the left of the Second Corps, prolonging his line on the ridge up to, and on to, Little Round Top, and, if practicable, to occupy it.

General Sykes, of the Fifth Corps, with Barnes's and Ayres's divisions, arrived at eight o'clock, having at daylight marched from his bivouac at Bonaughtown. Crawford's division of this corps did not arrive until about noon. The two divisions were first posted on the extreme right, south of Rock Creek, but, this position being subsequently thought to involve too great a development of the lines toward the right, they were by General Meade's orders moved across Rock Creek and massed on the Baltimore Pike, in support of the Twelfth Corps. Williams's division of the Twelfth Corps, which had been reinforced during the morning by Lockwood's brigade, two regiments from the defences of Baltimore, was at the same time moved to the left, across Rock Creek, and posted, with its right resting on Rock Creek, on the right of Geary's division of the Twelfth, which, after having been relieved on the left by the Third Corps, had been moved over to join the other division of its own corps. This new line was naturally a very strong one, and it was increased in strength by breastworks along the whole crest of the ridge.

The Artillery Reserve, under General Tyler, arrived during the morning. Thus the army, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, had now all reached the field, and those sturdy veterans, under their gallant leader, were known to be rapidly approaching. As soon as General Meade learned at Taneytown of the death of Reynolds, and that his corps was thus left without a proper commander, he had at once despatched orders to General Newton, then with the Sixth Corps, to proceed at once to Gettysburg and take command of the First Corps. This officer had in the early morning joined General Meade at the cemetery and reported to him. He had at the same time informed him that he had left General Sedgwick the night before at the head of his corps, on the direct road to Gettysburg, and that he was pushing forward as rapidly as possible.

The army, as far as assembled, was now posted as follows:¹ On the extreme right, on the low ground of the valley of Rock Creek, from which is a rapid ascent to the summit of Culp's Hill, with its right resting on and commanding the passage of Rock Creek, near

¹ See Map No. 17, July 2, 8.30 A. M.

McAllister's Mills, was the Twelfth Corps (Slocum's), mostly along the crest of the rocky and wooded ridge trending southeast and descending sharply into the valley of Rock Creek. It rested in the order of Williams's division on the right and Geary's on the left, ranging up the acclivity, his left connecting with the right of Wadsworth's division of the First Corps, which occupied the very summit of the hill. On the left of Wadsworth, extending around the turn of Cemetery Hill, conformably to the ground, was the Eleventh Corps, Barlow's division, now commanded by Ames, on the right, on what is called East Cemetery Hill, Schurz in the centre and Von Steinwehr on the left, Von Steinwehr's left resting on Ziegler's Grove. On the left of the Eleventh Corps came the Second Corps, continuing the line along Cemetery Ridge to the south, Hays's division on the right, Gibbon's in the centre, and Caldwell's on the left. On the left of the Second Corps was the Third Corps, occupying the ground from Caldwell's left toward Little Round Top.

The Fifth Corps was held in reserve on the right. The Artillery Reserve and its large trains were parked in a central position between the two flanks of the army, in the rear of Powers's Hill, on a road ¹ connecting the Baltimore Pike and the Taneytown Road. Buford, with his two brigades of cavalry, was patrolling and picketing the ground on the left and front of the Round Tops, and the Third Corps, along the Emmettsburg Pike and roads in the vicinity, keeping a vigilant watch on the right and rear of the enemy. Merritt's brigade of this division was still detached in the neighborhood of Emmettsburg. Gregg's division of cavalry, with the exception of Huey's brigade, arrived from Hanover about noon, and was posted on the extreme right flank of the army, at the intersection of the Hanover Road and the Low Dutch Road, with a line of pickets almost joining the right of the infantry line. Kilpatrick's division of cavalry, which had been at Abbottstown on the night of the 1st of July, was moving back from that place to join the right flank of the army.

While the army was coming up and going into position, General Meade personally, and through his staff, was engaged in assigning and rectifying positions, watching the enemy, and studying the field. Only after having issued all his principal orders and instructions of a preliminary kind did he establish himself at head-quarters. He then gave certain directions to his chief of staff, with respect to obtaining knowledge of the roads and country to the rear—information that

¹ Not shown on map.

might be needed as the basis of instructions under specified contingencies.

The head-quarters selected for General Meade were very conveniently situated, being central to all parts of the lines and easy of access. They were in the immediate rear of the Second Corps, and in close proximity to Hancock's head-quarters. They were but a short distance from the cemetery, where Howard and Newton were to be found, a few minutes' ride from Powers's Hill, where Slocum had his head-quarters, and not far from the Third Corps and Little Round Top, which was in plain view.

Somewhere between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, when nearly all of his staff were absent on various duties, General Meade came out of the little house, and glancing around and seeing Captain Meade, one of his aides, called him. To one who was familiar with the general's manner and tones of voice in different moods he seemed in excellent spirits, as if well pleased with affairs as far as they had proceeded. It was almost the first moment since his taking command that he had had an opportunity for private intercourse with any one. After addressing some pleasant remarks to Captain Meade, he instructed him to go to General Sickles, to indicate to him where the general head-quarters were, to inquire of him if his troops were yet in position, and to ask him what he had to report.

Captain Meade rode at once down the Taneytown Road for a distance of somewhere between a quarter and a half of a mile, when he came upon what proved to be the temporary head-quarters of the Third Corps. They were in a small patch of woods on the west side of the Taneytown Road. No one but Captain Randolph, General Sickles's chief of artillery, seemed to be about. Captain Meade expressed to this officer his wish to see General Sickles, and was in reply informed that General Sickles, being very tired, having had the day before a hard day, and having also been up all night, was at that moment resting in his tent, which was pitched in the vicinity. Upon receiving this statement Captain Meade delivered to Captain Randolph the message committed to him by General Meade. Captain Randolph thereupon said that he would at once see General Sickles, went into the tent, and after a few minutes' absence, returned. He then informed Captain Meade that the Third Corps was not yet in position, that General Sickles was in some doubt as to where he should go.

It will be seen from General Meade's message, coupled with Gen-

eral Sickles's reply, that previous instructions had evidently been sent and received. This is assumed in General Meade's message and implied in the response. Captain Meade, having at the time no knowledge of the character of these instructions, was unable to attempt to rectify any misunderstanding. He had been merely told to find out whether the Third Corps was yet in position. He therefore replied to Captain Randolph that he would return at once to head-quarters to report the facts. Riding as rapidly as possible, he was in a few minutes again with General Meade, to whom he repeated what he had seen and heard. At the moment when he reached head-quarters, General Meade was still in the little inclosure surrounding the house, a number of officers having assembled there. Upon hearing what Captain Meade had to report, the general said to him in his sharp, decisive way, to ride back as rapidly as possible to General Sickles, and to say to him that his instructions were to go into position on the left of the Second Corps; that his right was to connect with the left of the Second Corps; that he was to prolong with his line the line of that corps, occupying the position that General Geary had held the night before. Captain Meade was also instructed to say that it was of the utmost importance that his troops should be in position as quickly as possible.

By the time that Captain Meade, returning at once, had again reached General Sickles's head-quarters, he found the tents about to be struck, the general just mounted, while several of his staff-officers, also mounted, were gathered around him. Captain Meade delivered his message to the general in person, whereupon he replied that his troops were then moving, and would be in position shortly, adding something as to General Geary's not having had any position, but being massed in the vicinity. He then rode off in the direction of the front.

As Captain Meade was about to retire, Captain Randolph requested that he would ask General Hunt to come out there to look at some positions he had selected for artillery. Captain Meade then rode back to head-quarters and reported to General Meade what General Sickles had said.

These, as the reader will soon discover for himself, are not unimportant details. They relate to a part of the field in which the battle of the second day was the most severe, and where the fortunes of the Federal army hung for a long time doubtful in the balance. They relate to preliminary matters which, had they been different,

as intended by the commanding general, so also would have been very different the battle of the second day.

It has been asserted by General Sickles that he had received no orders of any kind from General Meade, and that his preliminary movements had to be made on his own responsibility. It has, however, been seen that, certainly before nine o'clock in the morning, he was notified in direct and positive terms what his position was expected to be, and that his reply indicated the receipt of previous orders. It was at the time thought that General Sickles fully understood where he was to go. The character of the messages sent by him to the commanding general left no impression on the mind of the latter, that there was any misunderstanding of moment. Later in the day, when it was discovered in what an extraordinary position General Sickles had placed his corps, General Meade deemed it barely possible he had misconstrued his orders. Not until nine months after the battle, when the remarkable proceedings before the committee on the conduct of the war had developed themselves, did he come to the conclusion that his orders had been wilfully disregarded.

From reports of signal officers and others, indications appearing of an attempt of the enemy to move around the right flank of the army, General Meade, after inspection of this part of the field during the morning, thought that an opportunity might present itself of making an attack upon the enemy from that quarter. This, or any other partial attack, was entirely compatible with his policy and intention to fight a defensive battle, in view of the fact that, unless his left flank were turned, and the enemy threatened to interpose between him and Baltimore and Washington, he, much better than the enemy, who must depend upon the country for supplies, could afford to play a waiting game. He instructed General Slocum to examine minutely the ground on the right, and to report as to the expediency of making a vigorous attack with a force composed of his own corps (the Twelfth) and the Fifth Corps; the attack to begin upon the arrival of the Sixth Corps, which was to co-operate with the two other corps. General Warren, the chief engineer of the army, was detailed to aid General Slocum in his examination of the ground. General Slocum reported unfavorably as to the attack, stating that he did not think that the ground occupied by the enemy on his front presented any inducement to dislodge him, and General Warren also reported that he did not think an attack advisable from that point.

Upon receiving these reports General Meade decided to abandon the projected attack, and to postpone all offensive operations until the arrival of the Sixth Corps, or until the intentions of the enemy were more fully developed.

The Army of the Potomac, except the Sixth Corps, coming up by a forced march, having now arrived and been deployed to meet the enemy forming on the opposite hills, and now awaiting his initiative, the reader may seize the opportunity to glance at the preparations of the Confederate army for the renewal of the contest.

On the early morning of July the 2d, Ewell's and Hill's troops having all reached the field during the night, were placed in position. Ewell's was posted on the left, extending from Benner's Hill to the seminary, through the town of Gettysburg. His line thus covered the right wing of the Army of the Potomac. The order in which the corps held the ground was, with Johnson's division on the left, Early's in the centre, and Rodes's on the right. Hill's corps was formed along Seminary Ridge, with Pender's division on the left, his left resting on the seminary, Anderson's division on the right, and Heth's division, now under command of Pettigrew, held in reserve.

During the morning, as Wilcox's, the right brigade of Anderson's division, was extending its line to the right, his two right regiments, the Tenth and the Eleventh Alabama, encountered and drove back a force under Colonel Berdan, sent out by General Sickles to reconnoitre. This, therefore, at that point of time, was the extreme right of the Confederate line. It rested about opposite to Caldwell's division of the Second Corps.

Longstreet's two divisions, commanded by McLaws and Hood, left at daylight their bivouac at the Chambersburg Road crossing of Marsh Creek, and about eight o'clock halted in the fields in the rear of the seminary. Pickett's division of this corps was still at Chambersburg.

General Lee, who had carefully studied the Federal lines the day before and again this morning, sent word to General Ewell to examine the ground in his front and to prepare to assault the enemy from that point. This in the contrary sense, the reader will observe, is what General Meade contemplated doing, up to the moment when he received the unfavorable reports of Generals Slocum and Warren. It seems to have been General Lee's first intention to move the bulk of his army to this flank and to assault there. He, like General

Meade, was deterred from doing this by the unfavorable reports of subordinates. He, then returning from personal inspection of this part of the field, resolved to make the main attack well over on the Federal left. Instructions to this end were given to General Longstreet, who was ordered to move his command to the right, and, gaining the Emmettsburg Road, to envelop the left flank of the enemy. At the same time orders were sent to Ewell to co-operate in this attack by a simultaneous advance of his troops against the Federal right. General Longstreet, however, not deeming himself in sufficient force to make the attack, delayed action in the concerted movement, so as to give time for the arrival of Law's brigade, which had been left behind on picket, and thus its inception was postponed until nearly noon, at which time Law had arrived.

The morning had passed very quietly so far as sound was concerned. Occasionally there was some firing along the skirmish lines, as on either side new lines were being developed. This was varied by an occasional artillery duel, as the position of a battery was detected. General Meade was, as has been said, resting his troops, strengthening his lines, awaiting the arrival of the Sixth Corps, and watching for any offensive movement on the part of the enemy.

It was during the maintenance of this attitude on both sides that, about eleven o'clock, General Sickles rode up to head-quarters, when some conversation occurred between him and General Meade as to his position. General Meade repeated what his intention was—that he was to occupy the position in which he understood that General Hancock had the night before placed General Geary. General Sickles stated in reply that, as far as he could gather, Geary had had no position. General Meade then explained to him that he was expected to prolong the line of the Second Corps, that his right was to rest on Hancock's left, and his left on Little Round Top, which General Meade pointed out to him. Some further conversation took place, in which General Sickles said that there was in the vicinity of where his corps was some very good ground for artillery, and requested that a staff-officer of General Meade's might be permitted to go out to see to the posting of his artillery. He also inquired if he were not authorized to post his corps in such manner as in his judgment he should deem most advisable. General Meade replied, "Certainly, within the limits of the general instructions I have given you; any ground within those limits you choose to occupy, I leave to you." General Meade then directed General Hunt to accompany General

Sickles, for the purpose of examining such positions as General Sickles might think good for artillery, and of giving General Sickles the benefit of his advice.

About eleven o'clock was committed a blunder on the left which had a serious effect on the immediately ensuing movements on that part of the field. With only partial information afforded him by Generals Pleasanton and Butterfield, chief of staff, the commanding general became a party to an action the bearings of which, when he soon thereafter learned of them, he repudiated as wholly beside his intention. Buford, as has been noted, had had his two brigades of cavalry out patrolling all the left front; in fact, almost all the way to Fairfield. His command had been for a long time on constant and active duty. It had been, as the reader has seen, engaged in the battle of the day before, bringing the Confederates to their first stand. He was out of rations and forage. His horses, through loss of shoes from continuously hard work, were becoming unserviceable. Seeing the army nearly up, he thought that he might be relieved, in order to refit. He therefore sent word to this effect to Pleasanton, who in turn reported the matter to head-quarters. General Meade, having previously been informed that all the cavalry was up, and taking it for granted that Pleasanton would substitute other cavalry for Buford's, gave permission to relieve him, directing that he should collect the trains of the army and guard them to Westminster, where he could refit. Without replacing Buford's with other cavalry, Pleasanton relieved him from duty, and thus the whole left flank of the army was destitute of cavalry. General Meade did not learn of this state of affairs until shortly before one o'clock. He was exceedingly annoyed, stating emphatically that he had had no intention of denuding his left wing by stripping it of cavalry. He at once ordered Pleasanton either to recall Buford or to bring forward some other cavalry. Unfortunately, it was too late to recall Buford; he was far on his way to Taneytown. A regiment of cavalry was therefore ordered over from Gregg, on the right wing; but by the time that it arrived it was too late to be of any service in the emergency, the enemy having enveloped all the left front and the action there having begun.

About 3 p. m. the near approach of the head of the column of the Sixth Corps was reported. The whole army was now up, and as the expected attack of the enemy had not taken place, General Meade, preliminary to any offensive action that he might take, sent for his

corps commanders to assemble at head-quarters for consultation and explanation of his intentions. At 3 P. M. he sent General Halleck the following despatch, fully describing the situation at that hour:

HEADQUARTERS NEAR GETTYSBURG, July 2, 1863, 3 P. M.

MAJ. GENL. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief*:

I have concentrated my army at this place to-day. The Sixth Corps is just coming in, very much worn out, having been marching since 9 P. M. last night.

The army is fatigued. I have to-day, up to this hour, awaited the attack of the enemy, I having a strong position for defensive. I am not determined on attacking him till his position is more developed. He has been moving on both my flanks apparently, but it is difficult to tell exactly his movements. I have delayed attacking to allow the Sixth Corps and parts of other corps to reach this place and rest the men. Expecting a battle, I ordered all my trains to the rear. If not attacked, and I can get any positive information of the position of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to move to my rear and interpose between me and Washington, I shall fall back to my supplies at Westminister. I will endeavor to advise you as often as possible. In the engagement yesterday the enemy concentrated more rapidly than we could, and towards evening, owing to the superiority of numbers, compelled the Eleventh and First Corps to fall back from the town to the heights this side, on which I am now posted. I feel fully the responsibility resting on me, but will endeavor to act with caution.

GEORGE G. MEADE.

Major General.

Most of the corps commanders had arrived at head-quarters and entered into brief conversations, when General Warren, learning through a report just brought to him of an inspection of the lines on the left, that General Sickles was not in the proper position, communicated the fact to the commanding general. At this moment there was some cannonading and a dropping fire of musketry over on the left. General Meade at once ordered Sykes, who was at head-quarters, to march his corps over to the left as quickly as possible, saying that he himself would meet him there and see to its posting. He was about to mount his horse, when General Sickles, having been

detained, presented himself in answer to the general summons. General Meade, telling him not to dismount, said that as there seemed to be some firing on his front, he would follow him out to the line. General Sickles then rode rapidly back to his corps, General Meade following him at a short distance. On passing the left of the Second Corps, General Meade, although prepared by the report of General Warren to find the Third Corps out of position, was wholly unprepared to find it advanced far beyond any possible construction of its being on the prolongation of the line of the Second Corps. Its lines were over half a mile out to the front, to the Emmetsburg Road, entirely disconnected with the rest of the army, and beyond supporting distance. Riding rapidly in that direction, the general reached a point almost in the rear of the position of Sickles, where he was joined by that officer.

At the moment when Sickles received, through Captain Meade, the order to establish the Third Corps on the prolongation to the left of the line of the Second Corps, he was actually there. Humphreys's division of the corps was massed on the left of the Second Corps, and Birney's division was in line to the left of Humphreys's near Little Round Top. At seven o'clock in the morning, Birney had relieved the troops of Geary's division and formed his line with his left resting near Little Round Top, with his right thrown in a direct line toward the cemetery, connecting on the right with Humphreys's division, his skirmishers thrown out to the Emmetsburg Road. The corps, as thus placed, was, with the exception that Little Round Top was not occupied, posted conformably to General Meade's instructions. The two brigades of the corps left at Emmetsburg, which had been ordered up by General Meade on the preceding night, had rejoined their respective divisions. These two brigades, De Trobriand's and Burling's, had started from Emmetsburg at daylight, and marching by the direct road, unmolested on their march, and seeing no signs of the enemy, had about nine or ten o'clock in the morning struck the Peach Orchard, and through it reached the lines on Cemetery Hill.

Sickles, returning from his visit to head-quarters, accompanied by Hunt, stated to him as they rode along that he wished to throw his line forward from the position which it then occupied to some high ground in front, so as to cover the Emmetsburg Pike. Hunt, knowing that Sickles had left his artillery ammunition train to follow his forward march to Gettysburg, inferred from this remark that Sickles wished to control that road until the train should arrive.

Sickles and Hunt rode directly to the position at the Peach Orchard, and from that point Sickles pointed out the line which he proposed occupying. Between Cemetery Ridge and Seminary Ridge, just west of Little Round Top, and distant from it five hundred yards, there rises a rocky ridge which trends west to the Emmettsburg Pike at the Peach Orchard. The ridge is here intersected by another running north along the Emmettsburg Pike and fading away toward the north about where the Rogers house¹ stands. It was to these two ridges, presently to be more minutely described, that Sickles proposed advancing.

Hunt, after examining the position along the Emmettsburg Pike to the Peach Orchard, remarked that the right of the proposed line was out where it would not be connected with the Second Corps; that to connect it would necessitate the throwing out the left wing of that corps, and that that could not well be done unless some woods that were in front were under control, so that the enemy could not take possession of them. At his suggestion, Sickles ordered out a force to reconnoitre the woods to the front and right, to ascertain if the enemy occupied them. About this time a very heavy cannonade opening over on the right, at the cemetery, Hunt, anxious about what was occurring there, and having now finished the examination of the line along the Emmettsburg Pike, told Sickles that he would ride on, and returning to head-quarters by way of Round Top, thus incidentally finish the inspection of the proposed line. As he was leaving, Sickles inquired of him if it would be proper for him to move forward and occupy the line which he had indicated. To this Hunt replied, decidedly not; that before doing so he should wait for orders from General Meade. Hunt then continued on his way, examining the remainder of the line. He found that, while the line possessed certain favorable conditions, it would so greatly lengthen the general line as to render it impossible for the Third Corps alone to hold it, and that, in addition to this, if the enemy should hold the woods on its front, it would be difficult to occupy and strengthen the salient angle at the Peach Orchard. In brief, there were certain points of the proposed line in its favor, provided it were, as it was not, supported on both right and left; but besides exposing the left flank of the Second Corps, it was, with relation to the position of the rest of the army, wholly unsupporting and unsupported. On his way to the cemetery, General Hunt stopped at head-quarters and briefly reported to the commanding general the result of his examination of

¹ Not shown on map.

the ground, adding that, if he were General Meade, he would not order troops out there until he had personally examined the line; that its relations to the general line were such that he himself would not take the responsibility of advising further in the matter.

The force sent out to reconnoitre by General Sickles, at the suggestion of General Hunt, was composed of about one hundred men of the First New York Sharpshooters, supported by the Third Maine Regiment, all under command of Colonel Berdan. It advanced from the Peach Orchard and entered the woods beyond, where it was deployed and moved for some distance through them in a northerly direction, parallel to the Emmettsburg Pike. It soon came into contact with a force of the enemy's, which was, as already noted when speaking of the enemy's dispositions, a detachment of Wilcox's brigade, of Anderson's division, which then formed the extreme right of the Confederate army, and which was pushing out in this direction, reconnoitring preparatory to straightening the lines. After a sharp fight Berdan's force was driven back with considerable loss. This encounter was reported, about two o'clock, to General Sickles. Notwithstanding that Hunt had cautioned Sickles against moving out on his proposed line without orders from General Meade, yet, although he had received no such authority, but on the contrary, had thrice received explicit instructions as to the proper line to occupy, he determinedly, in direct disobedience of orders, began to move his line out to this advanced position.

The author has been greatly indebted for the following details of the ground to the admirable description of it by General Hunt, in his "The Second Day at Gettysburg," in the *Century Magazine*, for December, 1886:

"The ground in the immediate rear of the ridge about to be occupied, of which there is now to become as much question as of the ground along the ridge itself, seeing that the contest raged over its whole extent and ended somewhat along lines where it should have begun, renders necessary here a description of the whole area involved, as its formation is far from simple.

"From Ziegler's Grove,¹ Cemetery Ridge runs for nearly half a mile about due south to another clump of trees. Here it turns abruptly to the east for two hundred yards, and then, turning south again, runs directly towards Round Top for a few hundred yards, until

¹ A point on the Taneytown Road occupied by the right of the Second Corps and left of the Eleventh Corps.

it reaches George Weikert's house.¹ The ridge, so far, is, with the exception of the two small groves mentioned, smooth and unwooded, and distant from Seminary Ridge, opposite, occupied by the enemy, very nearly a mile. At George Weikert's house the continuity of the ridge is lost in a tumbled mass of rock and hill and wood, compelling an eastward bend of the Taneytown Road, and falling ruggedly towards the west for a few hundred yards in the direction of Plum Run. At the south this rough ground ends abruptly at the low spot before mentioned, from which, somewhat further on to the south, rises the base of Little Round Top. This ground is densely wooded, and between it and Plum Run lay a clearing of three hundred yards in width, a portion of the generally open country on the immediate front of Cemetery Ridge.

"Devil's Den is the space enclosed by the confluence of Plum Run and a small affluent. Plum Run flows in a southeasterly course towards Little Round Top, and then, making a bend to the southwest, receives, at a short distance from there, a small tributary, Plum Run Branch, flowing from Seminary Ridge. It is a bold, rocky hill, lying between these streams; steep, like an escarpment, on its eastern face, and prolonged in a ridge-like manner towards the west. It is five hundred yards west of Little Round Top, and lower by one hundred feet than that summit. The surface on its northern extremity consists of huge rocks and boulders, forming numerous crevices and chasms. Plum Run valley and the slopes of both of the Round Tops are covered with boulders.

"A cross-road between the Taneytown Road and the Emmetsburg Pike runs along the northern base of Devil's Den. From its crossing at Plum Run to the Peach Orchard is eleven hundred yards. For four hundred yards of this distance there were woods on the north side, and a wheat field on the south side of the road. Beyond this point the road continues for seven hundred yards to the Emmetsburg Pike, along Devil's Den Ridge, which on the north slopes down to Plum Run, and on the south to Plum Run Branch.

"From Ziegler's Grove the Emmetsburg Pike runs diagonally across the valley between Cemetery and Seminary Ridges, crossing Seminary Ridge two miles from Ziegler's Grove. From the Peach Orchard to Ziegler's Grove is nearly a mile and a half. For half a mile of this distance the road runs along a ridge at right angles to the ridge of Devil's Den. The salient angle is therefore formed by

¹ Not shown on map.

the intersection of two bold ridges, one starting from Devil's Den, the other defined by the course of the Emmettsburg Pike. It is distant about six hundred yards from the woods that skirt Seminary Ridge and cover the movement of troops between it and Willoughby Run, half a mile beyond, to the west.

"South of the two Round Tops the country is free of natural impediments, the stone-fencing of the land being the chief obstacle to freedom of movement."

It was about two o'clock that Sickles's advance began. Birney's left was moved forward a quarter of a mile, resting on the rocky ground directly in front of Little Round Top, his right swung around so that it faced nearly south and rested on the Emmettsburg Road, at right angles to that road, at the Peach Orchard.

Humphreys's division had since early in the morning been massed on Cemetery Ridge on the left of the Second Corps. About noon it was ordered to form line of battle with its right resting on the Second Corps and left touching Birney's right. Owing to the position of Birney's line Humphreys found it impossible to fulfil both requirements, and learning from General Caldwell, commanding the division on the left of the Second Corps, that he had no orders to advance, Humphreys reported the fact to General Sickles. He was, nevertheless, ordered to move forward and form some five hundred yards in advance. This brought the left of his line to touch Birney's line, and his right five hundred yards in advance of the left of the Second Corps, and he was authorized to call upon Caldwell for support.

The ground upon which, in consequence of this movement, General Humphreys had been obliged to take his stand was in a hollow, sloping up to the Emmettsburg Road on his front, and to Cemetery Ridge in his rear. The ground immediately beyond the ridge on his front, beyond the Emmettsburg Road, fell away to the west toward Seminary Ridge. While in this position, Humphreys's Third Brigade, Burling's, was ordered away beyond his left, in support of Birney's division. Humphreys remained in this position until about four o'clock in the afternoon, with his skirmishers out on the Emmettsburg Road. Then, in obedience to orders from General Sickles, he began to move his troops still farther to the Emmettsburg Road on his front. Sickles thus still farther increased the gap that lay between Humphreys's troops and the left of the Second Corps. Humphreys's right, in the advanced position which he now reached, was three-quarters of a mile in front of the Second Corps. Thence his

line swept along the Emmettsburg Pike, connecting with the right of Birney at the Peach Orchard, where the centre of the whole line rested at the salient angle already described, continuing beyond until the extreme left rested a quarter of a mile in front of Little Round Top, on the rocky ground of Devil's Den, with a valley between the left and the Round Tops, easy of access to the enemy. As the line was now formed, to the cost of the gallant Third Corps, it was not only disconnected from the rest of the army, and with flanks exposed, but it was less compact than the other, being over a quarter of a mile longer than the line which had been relinquished. Putting out of consideration the fact that there was a gap between it and the Second Corps of three-quarters of a mile, its length was over a mile and a quarter, as against that of the direct line between the left of the Second Corps and Little Round Top of less than a mile.¹

Add to all these egregious defaults, that General Sickles did not even notify General Hancock, the commander of the Second Corps, on his right, the corps with which he had been ordered to connect, that he intended to advance. That general, with General Gibbon and others of his officers, was at the moment of the advance on the hill near the centre of his own line, looking with astonishment at the forward movement of the troops from a position which he had been informed represented in that place the line of battle. He and they were at utter loss to comprehend the meaning of the movement, but the immediate and far-reaching consequences of it, when in a few minutes the enemy's guns opened on the flank of that part of the line stretched along the Emmettsburg Pike, then became apparent to all.

At the moment when General Meade joined General Sickles the troops of the latter could hardly be said to be in any determinate position. General Meade having, on his way out to the front, in a measure taken in the situation of affairs, now asked Sickles to indicate to him his general position. When General Sickles had done so, General Meade told him that the line was not that intended to be occupied. Turning and pointing to the rear, to the unoccupied interval between the left of the Second Corps and Little Round Top, General Meade said that that was the line which he had been ordered to occupy; that he had advanced his line beyond supporting distance of the army; that the ground he was then on was neutral ground; that the enemy could not occupy it for the same reasons that his own troops could not. General Meade continued that he was fearful

¹See Map No. 18, July 2, 4.30 P. M.

the enemy would attack before he (Sickles) could be properly supported; that either he would lose the artillery which had been posted far to the front, or else that, if supported, the whole of the line which he had adopted would have to be abandoned; or, in other words, that he would have to fight the battle out where he was. General Sickles expressed deep regret at having occupied a position which did not meet the views of General Meade, and said that he would withdraw his troops to the line which General Meade had indicated. General Meade replied, "Yes, you may as well, at once. The enemy will not let you withdraw without taking advantage of your position, but you have to come back, and you may as well do it at once as at any other time." General Sickles had but just turned to order the execution of this movement, when the batteries opened with a terrific cannonade in front and to the left of the Peach Orchard, and General Meade, calling him back, said that, now that his line was about to be assailed, it was too late to retire, and ordered him to hold on and do the best he could, telling him that he would be supported. General Sickles then rode off. It was now between four and half-past four o'clock in the afternoon.

As the Third Corps was now posted, Birney's division was in position on the crest from Devil's Den to the Peach Orchard; Ward's brigade on the left, Graham's on the right, at the Angle, De Trobriand's in the centre, connecting them by a slender line. Smith's battery was with Ward, on the rocky hill at Devil's Den, Winslow's battery in the Wheat Field, and Clarke's on the crest in the Peach Orchard, facing south, while Randolph's was near the Angle, facing west. Humphreys's division was moving forward to take position on the crest along the Emmettsburg Road, his division in two lines, the first in line of battle, the second in line of battalions in mass. As he advanced the enemy opened with artillery, enfilading his left, and a little later with artillery on his front.

Hunt, who had immediately returned to this part of the field after his inspection at Cemetery Hill, at once sent to the Reserve Artillery for McGilvery's brigade. At the point of time when the enemy's batteries opened, he happened to be with Smith's battery on the rocky summit of Devil's Den. Smith had, after great exertions, just succeeded in getting his guns into position, hauling them by hand, one by one, over the rocks, and had opened with good effect on the advancing lines of the enemy. Hunt, as he left him to look for reinforcements, remarked to him that he would probably lose his battery.

McGilvery's brigade soon arrived, and Bigelow's, Phillips's, Hart's, and Thompson's batteries from it were ordered into position on the crest along the left centre and in the Peach Orchard, at the point of time when the enemy opened fire from a long line of guns posted along his front beyond the Emmettsburg Road.

The Confederate commanders were quick to perceive the absence of cavalry on the Federal left, and to take advantage of the fact. Scouts were at once sent out, with instructions to make their way through the woods and up to the summit of Round Top. Several Federal stragglers, who, ignorant of their position, were making their way from the trains in the rear of Round Top toward the Emmettsburg Road, in which direction they imagined the rear of their own army to be, were captured by the enemy. From information gathered from these men, and from the reports of the scouts, who very soon returned, having been upon Round Top and discovered that it was unoccupied, it was learned that there were no troops either there or in that direction. On the strength of these reports the Confederate officers on this part of the field proposed a flank movement around and the occupation of Round Top. The suggestion, however, was not favorably entertained, and the attack was at once begun.

This attack of the enemy, about to be received, was made by the divisions of Hood and McLaws, under Longstreet. We found these divisions leaving, about noon, the neighborhood of the seminary and marching to assault the left of the Federal line. There was great delay in this march, caused principally by the aim of the commanding officers to so mask the line of march behind the hills that it could not be detected by the Federal signal station on Little Round Top. The route followed was in consequence a roundabout one; there were many vexatious halts, so that it was past four o'clock in the afternoon before the troops came into position. McLaws's division, which had been leading the column, was formed on the right of A. P. Hill's corps, extending diagonally toward the Emmettsburg Road, Kershaw's brigade on the right and Barksdale's on the left, opposite the Peach Orchard, supported by Semmes's and Wofford's brigades, in reserve.

It appears that, at first, the Confederate commanders supposed that this extension of their right represented the point of extreme extension of the Union left. But, subsequently, finding that Sickles's corps curved backward, extending to Devil's Den, Hood's di-

vision, which had been marching in rear of McLaws's, was moved farther to the right, and formed line with McLaws's, with its right stretching across the Emmettsburg Road; Law's brigade on the right, Robertson's on the left, with Anderson's and Benning's brigades in support. Some twenty guns were posted in favorable positions along the line. The line thus occupied a partially wooded ridge, with open ground in front for about seven hundred yards east of the Emmettsburg Road, to the wooded heights held by the Third Corps.

The enemy, as has been said, opened with artillery fire, which continued for some time along their whole front, promptly and vigorously replied to by the Federal batteries. The order of infantry attack was for the brigade on the right, Law's, to begin the attack, the other commands successively taking it up to the left. It was nearly five o'clock in the afternoon when Hood's division advanced. Crossing the Emmettsburg Road and the open ground to the east of it, the division moved rapidly forward, under a heavy artillery fire, into the woods which here fringe the base of Devil's Den. The centre of the advance pushed straight for the summit on Devil's Den occupied by Smith's battery. General Hood falling severely wounded almost immediately after the action had begun, General Law succeeded him in command.

Law extended his own brigade well over to the right, to render this flank secure, and soon appeared in front of Round Top. Robertson's brigade found itself opposed to Ward's brigade, the extreme left of Sickles's line, strongly posted among the rocks of Devil's Den. Here ensued a desperate contest, which was at first favorable to the Federals, and Robertson was driven back. Law's movement to the right, up the slope of Round Top, had left an interval between his own brigade and that of Robertson's, so Benning's brigade had been brought up and occupied it. Law's brigade, with which were two of Robertson's regiments of Texans, which in the forward movement had become separated from their own brigade, having now a clear field as they supposed, swarmed up the northern slopes of Round Top, and then, making a partial change of front to the left, advanced to capture Little Round Top, which appeared to be unoccupied. These troops were, however, met by a murderous fire on the right flank, which compelled them to fall back and conform to the general line of advance.

This check to the enemy's confident advance on Little Round Top was administered by Vincent's brigade, of the Fifth Corps, which

had most opportunely taken position along the southern slope of Little Round Top.

When General Meade, upon reaching the field, fully realized the state of affairs, he had instructed Warren, who was among the officers who had accompanied him to the front, to ride at once to Little Round Top, see what troops, if any, were there, and to take every measure necessary for its proper defence. Officers were, at the same time, sent to hasten the march of the Fifth Corps, and with orders to the Sixth Corps, also on the march. Warren hastened away, and after riding along and examining the positions along Devil's Den Ridge, continued on to Little Round Top, which he found occupied by only two or three men of the signal corps. Warren saw at a glance that this, the key of the whole position of the army, without the possession of which the line of Cemetery Ridge would be untenable, must be occupied and held at all hazards. Looking westward toward the Emmettsburg Road, he could discern the long lines of Confederate infantry, greatly overlapping the Federal left, about to advance in line of battle. He despatched a messenger to General Meade, explaining the critical nature of the position, and asking for a division to hold it. General Meade, realizing the urgency of the situation, and fearful, although the Fifth Corps was momentarily expected, that it might not arrive in time to meet it, despatched an officer to Humphreys, who was close by, ordering him to move his division quickly to the endangered point. When General Humphreys received this order his division, with colors flying, was marching in line of battle from the intermediate position, in which he had been stationed for some hours, toward the advanced position on the Emmettsburg Road which Sickles had ordered him to occupy. Without halt he gave the order to move by the left flank in the direction of Little Round Top. He had, however, marched but a very short distance in that direction when he received word from General Meade, who had in the meantime been notified that reinforcements from the Fifth Corps had reached Round Top, countermanding the movement, and directing him to resume his march to the position assigned him by Sickles, on the Emmettsburg Road. Instantly, again without halting, the division about-faced and retraced its steps over the ground which it had just passed, and then, moving by the left flank, marched to the Emmettsburg Road. The whole movement was so admirably executed as to elicit praise from all who witnessed the promptness and skill of the gallant commander, and the steady bearing of the

troops, who, although subjected to an annoying artillery fire, moved with the precision of parade.

Humphreys now formed his division along the Emmettsburg Road, Carr's brigade being in the front line, connecting on his left with Graham, his right being near the Rogers house,¹ with Brewster in his rear. Seeley's battery was posted on his left, to the left of the Smith house,¹ and Turnbull's battery, from the Artillery Reserve, to the right of the house. Seeley and Turnbull were no sooner posted than they became engaged with the enemy's artillery opposite to them along Seminary Ridge. Gibbon at the same time sent to Humphreys's right two regiments from Harrow's brigade, which were posted near the Codori house,¹ along the Emmettsburg Road, and also moved forward Brown's battery, to the right and rear of these regiments, in the endeavor to protect this flank.

Warren, either while on his way to Round Top or after having been there and gone in search of reinforcements, met Sykes, who had preceded the advance of his corps from the right and had explained to him the importance of having troops at once on Round Top. The head of Barnes's division of the corps soon appearing, Sykes had detached Vincent's brigade from that division, to march at once for the point. Vincent, leaving the column, and passing around the eastern foot of Little Round Top, and then into the gorge between the Round Tops, suddenly appeared on the southern slope of Little Round Top just as Law's men were advancing up it.

Warren, on the summit of Little Round Top, alone with the signal men, could hear and see the battle raging at the Peach Orchard and along Devil's Den Ridge. He noticed the bullets beginning to strike near him, and beyond all else of interest saw, amid the eddying whirl of conflict, the general steady approach of the Confederate line. Observing a column of troops passing along the northern foot of Little Round Top, with a final word of encouragement to the signal men to remain and continue to wave their flag, so as to persuade the enemy of the presence of troops there, he dashes away in the hope of obtaining succor. He comes up with the rear of Weed's brigade, of Ayres's division of the Fifth Corps, on its way to the front. He explains in a few rapid words to Colonel O'Rorke, commanding the One Hundred and Fortieth New York, one of the regiments of this brigade, the urgent necessity of the case. O'Rorke without hesitation moves up the rear of the hill. Warren, riding on to the head of the brigade,

¹ Not shown on map.

and halting it, sends to Weed, and explains to him also the situation. Weed countermarches, and, following O'Rorke, quickly moves with Hazlett's battery and the rest of the brigade toward the summit of Little Round Top. O'Rorke is just in time; a desperate hand-to-hand conflict takes place on the very crest of the hill. The Confederates are hurled back, and Little Round Top is secured; not, however, without severe loss to the defenders, for O'Rorke and many officers and men of his regiment have been killed.

Vincent also, on the left of O'Rorke, had been engaged in a deadly struggle. The right of his line, a little in advance of Little Round Top, not being well protected, was at first driven back, until the arrival of O'Rorke checked the enemy. On Vincent's left the fighting had been at close quarters. Repeated charges and counter-charges had been made by the contending sides, but finally the enemy had been compelled to retire, and Vincent had firmly established his line across the space intervening between the Round Tops and up the southern slope of Little Round Top, connecting on his right with Weed's brigade, the troops of which were now all up and occupying the crest of the hill. Repeated efforts were made by the enemy to carry this important point, without avail, and he was finally obliged to draw off.

In this bloody struggle Vincent was mortally wounded, and Weed and Hazlett, with many other brave and valuable officers, were killed. Warren, who had remained at this point until its possession was secure, was slightly wounded.

Ward's brigade and Smith's battery, in its precarious position on the rocky summit of Devil's Den, together with De Trobriand's brigade on their right, supported by various regiments of Burling's brigade, sent by Humphreys to reinforce Birney, have done desperate fighting and thus far held their ground. Anderson, on the Confederate side, has been brought up on Robertson's left; he again and again assaults De Trobriand, but is repulsed with severe loss, Anderson himself being desperately wounded. The arrival of Benning, however, has enabled Robertson's men to reform, and the whole line again advancing, Ward and De Trobriand are gradually forced back, some guns (three in number) of Smith's battery falling, as Hunt had predicted, into the hands of the enemy. Tilton's and Sweitzer's brigades, of Barnes's division of the Fifth Corps, have been placed by Sykes in support of Birney's line. These brigades have advanced across the Wheat Field and relieved Birney's troops.

On the Confederate side McLaws's division has, in its turn, taken up the attack. Kershaw's brigade has moved out, followed by Semmes, exposed to the heavy fire of McGilvery's guns. He has directed his column to the heights held by Tilton and Sweitzer, although he has had to detach some of his regiments to attend to the Federal batteries posted along the Peach Orchard road. Barksdale has made a determined assault on Graham, at the angle at the Peach Orchard. The contest has been fierce and stubborn all along the line, but the angle has been broken in, Graham's brigade routed, Graham himself being wounded and a prisoner, the enemy is advancing, and the Third Corps, notwithstanding its heroic fight and stubborn resistance, is being swept from the field. The batteries on the Peach Orchard crest are, now that the angle is broken in, taken in flank and forced to withdraw. A brief stand is made, some two hundred and fifty yards to the rear. Officers, men, and horses fall by the score. The enemy presses on and all the batteries, except Bigelow's, are withdrawn further to the rear; guns are abandoned on the field, from sheer inability to get them away on account of loss in men and horses, many being drawn off by hand.

Bigelow's Ninth Massachusetts Battery makes a final stand near the Trostle house,¹ with prolonges fixed, desperately cut up, ordered by McGilvery to hold the ground at all hazards, so as to cover the retreat of the troops to another line. Sweeping the ground to the front, he retards the advance of the enemy, while a line of artillery, hastily collected by McGilvery from the serviceable batteries, reinforced by Dow's Maine battery, from the reserve, is formed in front of the woods east of Plum Run. Unsupported by infantry, this line, consisting of about twenty-five pieces all told, checks the pursuit, covers the abandoned guns, and supports the movement of Humphreys in retreat on the right. This being accomplished, scarcely anything remains of the devoted artillerists in the front, who have rendered it possible to form a second line, and have saved the Union front from being seriously broken.

Out of the complement of the battery one officer was killed, one mortally wounded, Bigelow also wounded; two sergeants were killed and four wounded, and two men were missing; the whole loss of the battery from the beginning to the end of the afternoon being twenty-eight men and eighty horses. Yet, despite this severe loss, the artillerists managed to drag two of their guns off the field.

¹ Not shown on map.

It has long before this time become evident to General Meade, who has remained in the vicinity of the Third Corps, that Sickles will be forced back. He has already ordered Hancock to send a division to report to Sykes. Hancock sends Caldwell, who promptly moves with his four brigades and reaches the field after Birney's division has been driven back, and just as Sweitzer and Tilton are being overwhelmed and pressed to the rear. Caldwell's leading brigade, Cross's, is formed on the edge of the Wheat Field, and Kelly's brigade coming up on his right, together they charge through it under a severe fire. A fierce fight ensues, Colonel Cross is killed, and, notwithstanding the heroic behavior of the troops, they are brought to a stand. Brooke and Zook are now put in, Brooke following the previous direction of Cross's regiments and relieving them, and then gallantly charging, driving before him Semmes's brigade, which has come up on Kershaw's right; Semmes is killed, and the ridge is once more in possession of the Federals. Zook's troops come up on the right, Zook himself has been killed, and Brooke takes command of the whole line. Everything else, however, is gone, and alone he is fiercely assailed, front, right, and left, and the line of his retreat threatened. At the same time Wofford's brigade, which, following Barksdale, has passed his right and is closing in on that flank, makes, in concert with the rest of the Confederate line, a determined onslaught on Brooke. Finding himself entirely unsupported, Brooke, skilfully handling his men to the last, relinquishes his ground, although stubbornly fighting step by step in retreat, and gradually falls back across Plum Run. Farther to the left, Ayres, who with his two brigades of regulars has advanced in front of Little Round Top, covering the valley between that point and Devil's Den, is also, after severe loss, compelled to fall back. The repeatedly contested ground is covered with thousands of the dead and wounded of both sides.

Farther to the right, on the extreme right of the Third Corps, Humphreys has as yet maintained his position, but now that the angle at the Peach Orchard is lost, and all support on his left gone, he finds himself assaulted on this flank by Barksdale. General Sickles has been wounded and General Birney commands the corps. Birney sends word to Humphreys, to retire the left of his line toward Little Round Top to connect with a new line to be formed in that direction. Humphreys having, as noted, nothing to support his left, is now, in beginning this manœuvre, attacked on his front and right

by Hill's troops, who have advanced to assist Longstreet's assault. Humphreys is loath to yield the ground, but he is compelled by orders and necessity to fall back. Slowly and sullenly his men retire, assailed on both flanks and in front. The two regiments of Harrow's brigade, sent by Gibbon to the Rogers house¹ to protect Humphreys's right, are also overpowered and driven back, each of them losing its commanding officer and many of its men. The entire advanced line has now recoiled before the enemy.

The Confederates, fiercely following up their success, advance their whole line. The Federal true left, at Little Round Top, has, however, been by this time made secure, and a new line, departing from that point, has been formed on the eastern side of Plum Run. Crawford's division of the Pennsylvania Reserves, of the Fifth Corps, has come up, Fisher's brigade being sent to the extreme left, on Round Top, and McCandless's, under the immediate direction of Crawford, charges down the slope of Little Round Top and across the open space to the eastern edge of the Wheat Field, just as the Confederates, exhausted by their long and continuous fighting, retire from the advanced position gained by them to the western side of the Wheat Field.

At this time the Sixth Corps, after its memorable march of thirty-four miles, appears on the field, and Sedgwick promptly moves to the support of the left centre. Nevins's brigade, of Wheaton's division, being on the lead, forms line on the right of Crawford's Pennsylvania Reserves, and takes part in their advance, driving back the enemy and recovering some of the abandoned guns. To the right of this point is the formidable line of artillery established by McGilvery of some twenty-five guns, gathered from all quarters and massed on the east side of Plum Run, whose fire does great execution among the troops assaulting Humphreys in his retreat.

There is still, however, an open space between the extreme right of the left wing and Hancock's left. General Meade, after having seen the new line firmly established along Plum Run Ridge, rides along this open part of the field. He has already sent to Slocum, on the extreme right, directing him to send a division to the left. In the meantime he orders Hancock to send another brigade to the assistance of the Third Corps, and shortly after the wounding of Sickles instructs him to assume command of that corps. Hancock orders up Willard's brigade, of Hays's division, and, personally leading it

¹ Not shown on map.

out beyond McGilvery's guns, places it in position. Willard almost immediately comes into action with Barksdale, whom nothing heretofore has seemed able to stop, but who is finally brought to a stand. A fierce combat at close quarters ensues; Willard and many of his men are killed, but the further advance of the enemy on this part of the field is stayed. Barksdale also has fallen at the head of his brigade.

The Twenty-first Mississippi, of Barksdale's brigade, was the only Confederate regiment that succeeded in crossing Plum Run. This regiment had become separated from the brigade as it closed in on Humphreys, and had taken part in the attack on Bigelow's battery. As the remnants of that battery were being withdrawn from the field, the regiment pressed closely after them, crossed Plum Run, and charged and captured Watson's battery, the left battery of the new line that McGilvery had formed. The regiment was, however, only able to hold it for a short time, for Lieutenant Peeples of the battery placed himself at the head of the Thirty-ninth New York, one of Willard's regiments which had been left in reserve, charged and recovered it.

Slocum, in obedience to General Meade's call for reinforcement, takes Ruger's division and Lockwood's brigade out of his line and sends them, under command of General A. S. Williams, over to the left. Williams promptly moves over by the most direct route, and as his leading brigade, Lockwood's, of only two regiments comes on the field it is quickly posted, General Meade himself riding at its head and moving forward with it through and beyond McGilvery's guns. This small brigade charges the enemy, driving him back and recovering several guns that had been abandoned for want of sufficient force to carry them off the field.

Hancock, after seeing Willard well engaged, rides farther to the right, when he suddenly perceives a force of the enemy making its way unopposed to gain the crest of Cemetery Ridge. This is Wilcox's brigade of Anderson's division, which, after having assisted in driving Humphreys back, is now triumphantly making for the ridge. Hancock, prompt to recognize the situation, calls upon the First Minnesota, one of his own regiments, which is just coming up, and orders it to charge the advancing brigade. Gallantly responding, the regiment hurls itself on the approaching column and, although with fearful loss of officers and men, wins the ground.

Yet there still remains the gap in the line to the left of the Sec-

ond Corps. Gibbon, temporarily in command of the corps, has moved Harrow's brigade to his left, slightly bent to the rear, in order to protect this exposed flank and cover this ground originally held by Caldwell. General Meade has been nearly continuously on the field, making the most strenuous exertions for establishing the line, in person bringing up and placing reinforcements, exposing himself in the reckless manner dictated by the emergency, during which he has his faithful old horse Baldy shot under him. He is now returning from head-quarters, to which he has been for a brief period, and while there having ordered Newton to bring up Robinson and Doubleday quickly to occupy the gap in the line to the left of the Second Corps. For a few minutes affairs seem critical in the extreme. The Confederates appear determined to carry everything before them. A vigorous attack is made by them at various points along the whole front. Gibbon's line becomes heavily engaged along his whole front, while on his left, as we know, there is the space still unoccupied.

At this gap, waiting for the coming of Newton, surrounded only by a few of his aides and orderlies, stands Meade. The crash of musketry and the shouts of the contending troops resound on all sides, and the air seems filled with shot and shell. At this moment Meade sees at a short distance off a line of the enemy making straight for the gap. Will nothing stop these people? He glances anxiously in the direction of the cemetery, whence succor should come. It will be a disaster unless something can stop these troops, if only for a brief space of time. The general realizes the situation but too well. He straightens himself in his stirrups, as do also the aides who now ride closer to him, bracing themselves up to meet the crisis. It is in the minds of those who follow him that he is going to throw himself into the breach—anything to gain a few moments' time. Suddenly some one cries out, "There they come, general!" and, looking to the right, Newton is seen galloping in advance of Doubleday's division, followed by Robinson. In close column by division, at a sharp double quick, with muskets at a right shoulder, the two divisions sweep down the Taneytown Road, swing around to the right, and as, amid the wildest excitement and shouting, they press forward to the line of battle, Meade rides ahead with the skirmish line, waving his hat, saying to those about him, "Come on, gentlemen," and some one remarking that it seemed at one time pretty desperate, it is pleasant to hear him reply in his hearty way: "Yes, but it is all right now, it is all right now."

A sharp fusillade follows. The Confederates, exhausted by their long, brave, and fruitless struggle for the mastery, are unable to make head against these fresh troops. The Federal lines advance, the enemy is driven back across the Emmettsburg Road, all the guns that have been abandoned are recovered, and as darkness comes over the scene the musketry firing gradually dies away.

It was, as we now know, General Lee's intention to make a simultaneous attack on both flanks of the Union army. Instructions had been sent to Ewell to have his command in readiness to advance when he heard Longstreet's guns open for his assault on the Union left wing and flank, making thus in his favor a diversion which was to be converted, if opportunity should offer, into a real attack. In conformity with this plan Johnson had been placed on the extreme left of the Confederate force, facing Culp's Hill to the west, and a number of guns had been placed on Benner's Hill, the only available place for artillery on the direction of the Confederate lines there. At about four o'clock in the afternoon, when Longstreet's artillery was for the first time heard on the Confederate extreme left, the artillery opened there and continued to fire for over an hour. It was so effectively replied to by the Federal batteries on Cemetery Hill that by the end of this time it was silenced and forced to take cover, after having suffered great loss in men, horses, and in many pieces disabled.

It was not until nearly sunset that Johnson advanced to the attack of the Federal right. The ground over which he must pass is very difficult, heavily wooded, and covered with rocks and bowlders. Over this the division, formed with Jones's brigade on the right, Williams's next on his left, Steuart's next on his left, and Walker's concluding the left of the line of attack, moved forward to the assault. They had not proceeded very far, however, when active demonstrations on the part of Gregg's cavalry, covering the right flank of the Army of the Potomac, compelled the halting and detachment of Walker's brigade to look to the safety of the assaulting columns, through which necessity that brigade became neutralized for the attack.

It will be remembered that during the height of the battle on the left Slocum had sent Ruger's division and Lockwood's brigade, under A. S. Williams, from his right over to support the left, and that Lockwood's brigade had rendered efficient service in aiding in the final repulse of the enemy. Ruger's division, as their services proved not

to be needed, had only crossed the Taneytown Road when they were halted.

Shortly after these troops moved out Slocum had ordered Geary, with two brigades, to follow Williams, leaving his Third Brigade, Greene's, to hold the right flank. Geary, for some unaccountable reason, instead of proceeding on the direct road to the left wing, following Williams in the direction of the firing, had crossed Rock Creek and marched down the Baltimore Pike. Fortunately he was halted before going very far, remaining where he was for the night.

On Greene principally, who held the line of works centring at Culp's Hill, the left of the line of the Twelfth Corps, connecting on his left with Wadsworth's division of the First Corps, had devolved the arduous task of guarding the right flank of the army. How admirably this duty was performed the sequel will show. When the position was first occupied by the Twelfth Corps, quite a substantial line of breastworks had been erected. These works were now about to prove of great value. Greene was ordered to occupy, with his one remaining brigade, the whole of the works previously occupied by the entire Twelfth Corps. He had scarcely extended his lines so as to cover the vacated position of Kane's brigade, which had been on his right, when the attack of the enemy on him began. As soon as it began he sent to Howard and Wadsworth for reinforcements.

Johnson, moving forward with his three brigades, marched down the slopes of the hill which he had occupied to the bed of Rock Creek, driving before him the Federal skirmishers, and at about seven o'clock in the evening charged the position of Culp's Hill. Between this time and nine o'clock determined assaults continued to be made, every one of which was gallantly met and repulsed with heavy loss to the assailants, inflicted by the troops of Greene and those of the First Corps, occupying the northeastern line of Culp's Hill on his left. Jones on the right, Williams in the centre, were each time driven back, leaving many dead and wounded to mark their line of advance. General J. M. Jones was severely wounded in one of these repulses.

Steuart, on the left of the assaulting columns, met with more success than these. Concealed and sheltered by woods and rocks, and under cover of night, he worked his way around to his left until he chanced upon the unoccupied works of Williams's division, which at the point where Steuart struck them were perpendicular to the general line. This success seriously menaced for a time the integrity of the right flank of the Federal line. It was, however, reversed by

General Greene, who, handling his small command with great skill, swung his right regiment to the rear, and presenting a firm front to Steuart, prevented him from making any further advance. About ten o'clock at night Kane's brigade returned and took position on the right, further strengthening this flank.

Howard and Wadsworth had promptly responded to Greene's call for reinforcements, each of them sending three regiments. These rendered valuable aid in repulsing the assaults described, and in relieving those regiments of Greene's whose ammunition had become exhausted. When the fighting closed, Greene held intact all the works of his own brigade, and with Kane's returned brigade, had occupied a new line on his right, perpendicular to his main line, and parallel to the breastworks taken and held by Steuart's troops.

As soon as Johnson had become fully engaged, just before dusk, Early, who with his division was occupying the line between Johnson and the town of Gettysburg, opposite Cemetery Hill, ordered Hays's and Avery's brigades to advance and carry the works on Cemetery Hill. Gordon's brigade was moved forward to support these two brigades. Smith's brigade of this division was still detached, on the left of the Confederate army. Hays and Avery, exposed to a heavy fire from the batteries on Cemetery Hill, advanced in splendid order, passed over the ridge in their immediate front, across a hollow between that and Cemetery Hill, and finally up the slope of Cemetery Hill, easily brushing aside the troops of Ames's division of the Eleventh Corps, and after surmounting all difficulties, reached the crest of the hill, and in an instant were in among the guns of Wiederich's battery, spiking the left section of Ricketts's battery, on Wiederich's right. A fierce hand-to-hand fight here took place, the officers and men of the batteries, using handspikes, rammers, pistols, and even stones, succeeding at last in checking the enemy sufficiently long to enable reinforcements to come to the rescue. Colonel Avery, commanding one of the Confederate brigades, was mortally wounded in this assault.

The reinforcements which so opportunely arrived were Carroll's brigade of the Second Corps, which had been sent by Hancock to report to Howard. As the firing died away on Hancock's front, and as he was riding to the right of his command on the Taneytown Road, he caught the sound of continuously heavy firing on Cemetery Hill, seeming to him to be coming nearer and nearer. Without hesitation, without waiting for instructions, he at once ordered Gibbon to send

Carroll's brigade over to the right, to report to Howard. Carroll had promptly drawn out from the line, and moving by the right, on the double-quick, had soon, as narrated, covered the rear of the captured position on Cemetery Hill. Although it was quite dark, and difficult to distinguish friend from foe, he had, without loss of time, formed his command in column of regiments, charged on the victorious enemy, and after a sharp struggle, had driven back and down the hill the brigades of Hays and Avery, had retaken the captured guns, and advancing to the stone wall at the foot of the hill, had reformed the broken lines. General Meade's attention also had been attracted by this firing. Receiving word from Howard of the approaching attack on the right, and of the need of reinforcements, he ordered Newton to send Robinson's division at once back to the cemetery. He himself rode rapidly over there, and was on McKnight's Hill¹ at the time of the attack, sending a message to the troops engaged on Cemetery Hill to hold fast, that reinforcements would soon be there. Robinson's division shortly afterward filed through the cemetery to the Baltimore Pike, beyond which the contest had been raging; but Carroll's men had already done the work required.

This closed the fighting for the day, for although it had been arranged that Rodes's division, posted in the town of Gettysburg, on the right of Early, should co-operate in the assault, by the time he had drawn his troops out of the town, had formed them, and was ready to advance, Early had already assaulted and been repulsed from Cemetery Hill. By that time it was so late that it was not deemed advisable to continue the action, and Rodes's troops were recalled.

When it was found that the services of Ruger's division were not needed on the left, Williams had ordered it to return, as quickly as possible, to the right and reoccupy the line they had vacated. It was about dusk when Ruger received this order and moved over. On crossing the Baltimore Pike and entering the woods to gain his old line, his skirmish line that Ruger had sent out well in advance to reconnoitre, fearing that the enemy may have crept in during his absence, were fired upon and driven back. It was then discovered by Ruger that all that part of the breastworks on the left of his original position were in possession of the enemy, as also were those farther to his left that had been occupied by Geary. That part of the breastworks on the right and extending to Rock Creek were still un-

¹ Not shown on map.

occupied. These he at once took possession of. Owing to the darkness and the difficult character of the ground, it was deemed too late to attempt to drive the enemy out that night. Ruger then placed his division along a slight crest to the east of the Baltimore Pike, so as to prevent the enemy making any farther advance toward the turnpike. It was after midnight before these arrangements were completed. About one o'clock next morning, Candy's brigade of Geary's division returned and took position on the right of Kane's brigade, which, it will be remembered, had already returned and been posted in support of Greene's right; the line as here formed extended perpendicularly almost to the Baltimore Pike, at which point Candy's right rested.

To bring the history of the movements of both armies down to midnight of July 2 it will be necessary to return to Stuart's Cavalry, which, in obedience to Lee's orders to join the main army, retiring on the evening of July 1 from in front of Carlisle, continued their movement toward Gettysburg. On the receipt of Lee's orders, Stuart had despatched word back to Hampton, whose brigade had not yet come up, to turn his command southward and proceed ten miles in the direction of Gettysburg. This order met Hampton at Dillsburg. Having covered the allotted distance, he halted for the night. On the morning of the next day, July 2, he continued on to Hunters-town, and was moving thence toward Gettysburg, to take position on the left of Lee's army, when he learned of the approach of a body of Federal cavalry moving on Hunterstown, and was directed by Stuart to return and meet it. It proved to be Kilpatrick's division of cavalry, which having, on the morning of July 2, returned from Abbottstown to the right flank of the army, had been again sent out in the direction of Hunterstown to endeavor to get in the rear of Lee's army and damage his trains. Custer's brigade, in the advance, came in contact with Hampton, and quite a sharp fight between the two followed, lasting well into dark. Judging from the official reports of the action, it would seem that both sides claimed the advantage in the engagement. However that may be, Kilpatrick was ordered during the night to return to Two Taverns, which place he reached at daylight of July 3, Hampton remaining at Hunterstown during the night. Toward the afternoon of July 2, Stuart, with Fitz Lee's and Chambliss's brigades, took position on the extreme left flank of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Gregg's division of Federal cavalry, moving on the Hanover Road

toward Gettysburg, in the afternoon of the 2d of July, threatened to such good effect, as we have seen, the left flank of Ewell's corps, about to attack Culp's Hill, as to cause the detachment of Walker's brigade from the attacking column to keep him in check. During the night Gregg moved across to the Baltimore Pike, and took position on that road, at its junction with the —— Road. Merritt's brigade of regular cavalry moved during the 2d of July from Mechanicsville to Emmettsburg.

Robertson's and Jones's brigades of cavalry, which had been left by Lee south of the Potomac, had, in default of the presence of Stuart's Cavalry, been ordered to the front by Lee, on the 1st of July, and were now on their way up the Cumberland Valley, as by the 3d of July they had reached Cashtown. Imboden's brigade of cavalry was advancing from Chambersburg to Gettysburg. Thus by the night of July 2 the whole of the available Federal and Confederate cavalry had either closed in or was closing in on Gettysburg, the major portion of each being actually on the field.

When the action finally ceased, and comparative quiet reigned, General Meade summoned his corps commanders to head-quarters, in order to obtain from them information as to the condition of their respective commands, and to confer with them as to what action, if any, should be taken on the following day.

It was after nine o'clock before the corps commanders had assembled in the one little room which had served the original occupants of the house for all purposes of living. Here, in these close quarters, were a bed, a table, and a few chairs and other appurtenances, on which sat or reclined, as convenience dictated as most restful, Generals Sedgwick, Slocum, Hancock, Howard, Sykes, Newton, Birney, A. S. Williams, and Gibbon. As officer after officer arrived, each in turn reported what had taken place on his immediate front during the day, and the extent of his losses so far as they could be obtained. The result of the day's fighting having been thus ascertained, a general conversation ensued, in which the position of the army, the probability of an attempt on the part of General Lee to make a flank movement around its left, and the dispositions which, in that event, should be made, were thoroughly discussed. The conversation had taken a very wide range, and continued for a long time, when General Meade finally summarized the points to be decided and submitted them in the form of a series of questions. These were as to whether or not, under the existing circumstances, it would be more

advisable for the army to remain in the position which it then held or to retire to one nearer its base. Again, if it were decided to maintain its position, should the army attack, or should it await the attack of the enemy. And, in the latter event, for how long should the army await the enemy's attack. Commencing with General Gibbon, the youngest in rank, each officer replied in succession. It was the unanimous opinion that the army should maintain the position then held and await further attack before assuming the offensive. This opinion agreed entirely with General Meade's own views as to the proper course to adopt. He did not take a prominent part in the discussion. He had clearly stated what his instructions had been and the conclusion to be drawn from the results of the day's fighting. He had from the first felt that the enemy would again attack. In consequence of this, and while the conference was still progressing, he sent the following despatch to General Halleck, which clearly shows what he had resolved to do:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 2, 1863, 11 P. M.*

GENERAL HALLECK:

The enemy attacked me about 4 P. M. this day, and after one of the severest contests of the war, was repulsed at all points. We have suffered considerably in killed and wounded; among the former are Brigadier General Paul Zook, and among the wounded, Generals Sickles, Barlow, Graham, and Warren slightly. We have taken a large number of prisoners. I shall remain in my present position to-morrow, but am not prepared to say, until better advised of the condition of the army, whether my operations will be of an offensive or defensive character.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major General.

The confidence of all as to the ability of the army to hold its position against any direct attack of the enemy was manifest. There was universal satisfaction when, at the close of the vote in favor of the army's maintaining its position, General Meade said quietly, though decidedly: "Such then is the decision." It was after midnight before the conference broke up and the officers departed for their several head-quarters. As they were leaving, General Meade had a few moments' conversation with General Gibbon. During the course of their remarks reference was made to the majority of

the officers present having voted in favor of acting on the defensive and awaiting the action of General Lee. General Meade said: "Gibbon, if Lee attacks me to-morrow it will be on *your front*." Gibbon expressed surprise and asked why he thought so. "Because," replied General Meade, "he has tried my left and failed, and has tried my right and failed; now, if he concludes to try it again, he will try the centre, right on your front." To this Gibbon promptly responded, "Well, general, I hope he does, and if he does, we shall whip him."

IV

THE THIRD DAY

WHEN Slocum and Williams, after the meeting of corps commanders had broken up, had returned, after midnight, to their respective commands on the right, they learned for the first time of the enemy's occupation of the Twelfth Corps's vacated lines. Slocum at once notified General Meade of the facts, when he was ordered to dislodge the enemy in the morning. Orders for an attack at day-break, to regain the lost portions of the lines, were then issued.

On the southern slope of Culp's Hill, nearly at right angles to Rock Creek, is a narrow swale running from Rock Creek, about the middle of which a sharp indentation pierces the hill, forming to the eastward of it a well-defined spur of the hill. The crest of this spur had been, until the evening of the second day's battle, occupied by Ruger's troops, his left joining Geary's right on the main hill, and his line extending in a semicircle around and over the swale, until his right rested on Rock Creek, the swale penetrating his line from the rear. The enemy having, upon the withdrawal of Ruger's troops for reinforcement of the left wing, occupied the position on the spur, the morning of the 3d of July dawned upon an entirely different disposition of the troops on this part of the field. Geary's line, which had been along the main hill in the direction of the prolongation of the spur, was now extended and sharply refused on the ridge west of the indentation on the hill, while Ruger's troops, consisting as before of McDougall's and Colgrove's brigades, had formed in the order named, from left to right, a line slightly concave to the enemy's position, entirely south of the swale, with their left resting almost on the Baltimore Pike and their right on Rock Creek.¹ Lieutenant Muhlenberg, chief of artillery of the Twelfth Corps, stationed his own and Lieutenant Kinzie's batteries, supported by Lockwood's brigade, southwest of the Baltimore Pike, commanding the enemy's position, the low ground in the descent of the swale to Rock Creek, and enfilading for some distance the line of the bed of the creek. To the southeast of these two batteries were posted, on Powers's Hill,

¹See Map No. 19, July 3, 4.30 A. M.

Knapp's battery, under Lieutenant Atwell, and on McAllister's Hill,¹ Lieutenant Winegar's battery, both facing north, thus making a cross-fire at right angles with the line of fire of the two other batteries, and commanding, across the swale previously described, those portions of the Twelfth Corps's lines held by the enemy. These two hills, Powers's and McAllister's,¹ are marked tops lying side by side, just west of Rock Creek, about a quarter of a mile distant from each other and about two-thirds of a mile from the enemy's position. To guard against any movement of flanking by the enemy, Neill's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, which had been sent by General Meade to Powers's Hill on the previous evening, was thrown across Rock Creek, on the prolongation of Ruger's line.

The enemy during this time was not idle. Ewell had reported his success to Lee, and the latter, encouraged by his view of the result of the day's operations, had determined to continue his efforts to carry the position of the Army of the Potomac. Ewell was, therefore, ordered to resume at daylight the attack from Johnson's front, and was given to understand that a simultaneous attack would be made by Longstreet on the right wing. Now that Stuart had come up with his cavalry, Walker's brigade, which had been protecting Johnson's left flank, became available for his operations and was returned to him, and Daniels's and O'Neal's brigades, of Rodes's division, were brought over from their position in the town of Gettysburg to strengthen him, as was also Smith's brigade, of Early's division, for the same purpose.

It is desirable now to glance at the general position of both armies in order to note changes that have taken place consequent upon the battle of the previous day.

On the Federal side, on the extreme right, the Twelfth Corps has resumed its position, except where the enemy partially occupies its former lines. On its left Wadsworth's division, of the First Corps, still holds its line around Culp's Hill. On Wadsworth's left is Carroll's brigade, of the Second Corps, holding the stone wall at the foot of Cemetery Hill, so gallantly recovered by it from the enemy on the previous evening. The troops of Ames's division, of the Eleventh Corps, are distributed on Carroll's right and left. To the left, again, are Schurz's and Steinwehr's divisions, of the Eleventh Corps, in their original positions around Cemetery Hill, resting their left on the

¹ McAllister's Hill is one-quarter mile northeast of Powers's Hill; name not shown on map.

Taneytown Road. Hancock, with Hays's and Gibbon's divisions, of the Second Corps, continues the original line along Cemetery Ridge. But where Caldwell's division of this corps stood the day before we now find Newton, with Doubleday's division, of the First Corps. On the left of Newton, continuing the direct line toward the Round Tops, comes McGilvery's artillery of thirty-nine guns, his line having been moved back from the position of the evening before, on Plum Run Ridge, whence he had helped to stem the advancing tide of the Confederates. Caldwell's division, of the Second Corps, was posted in rear of McGilvery's guns. Next in order came Torbert's brigade, of Wright's division of the Sixth Corps, which, at Newton's request, Sedgwick had just sent to strengthen this part of the line. On the left of this brigade is the Fifth Corps, with Bartlett's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, posted between the divisions of Barnes and Ayres, continuing the line on to Round Top. In advance of these, McCandless's brigade of Pennsylvania reserves, of the Fifth Corps, and Nevin's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, still hold the ground to the Wheat Field. On the extreme left, with its right on Big Round Top, its line facing south, at right angles to the general position of the army, posted athwart, and guarding the approaches to the rear by the Taneytown Road, is Wright, with Grant's and Russell's brigades, of the Sixth Corps. The other two brigades of the Sixth Corps, Shaler's and Eustis's, were in reserve on the left. Robinson's division, of the First Corps, is in reserve on the right, back of Cemetery Hill, ready, if needed, to support the Twelfth Corps on its front. What remains of the Third Corps is held in reserve near the left centre.

Gregg's and Kilpatrick's divisions of the cavalry are on the extreme right flank of the army, the former on the Baltimore Pike, at the crossing of White Run, the latter at Two Taverns.

The corps of the Confederate army held the same positions relatively to each other as on the preceding day. Longstreet was on the right flank, with McLaws's and Hood's divisions, the latter now under Law, holding the advanced ground at the Peach Orchard and toward Devil's Den, from which they had driven Sickles. Pickett's division of this corps had come up during the previous afternoon, and was now bivouacked in the rear of the Confederate right centre preparatory to taking its place for its ever-memorable assault. A. P. Hill's corps holds the centre and Ewell's the same position as before, on the left.

Stuart, with Hampton's, Fitzhugh Lee's, Chambliss's, and Jenkins's brigades of cavalry, was moving out to the left; Robinson's and Jones's brigades of cavalry were moving toward Gettysburg from Cashtown.

As soon as it was light enough to see, or about four o'clock in the morning, Muhlenberg opened with his artillery and subjected the enemy to a damaging fire, which continued about an hour. Geary was then about to advance, when Johnson, who, it seems, was also ready to advance, made a vigorous attack all along his line. Its force fell chiefly on Greene's and Kane's brigades, whom Steuart furiously attacked, and was repulsed with great loss to the enemy. Lockwood's brigade was then brought up and reinforced Greene's lines. Johnson's right, to which point Daniels's brigade was directed as a support to Jones, found the position on its front so strong that no serious attempt was made to assault it. In front of Geary, however, where the enemy thought that opportunity offered to make a lodgment, the fight continued for hours. Steuart and Walker again and again assaulted, but were always repulsed with heavy loss. The breastworks on the Federal side so well protected the men that their loss was comparatively slight.

About eight o'clock General Meade sent Shaler's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, to the support of the Twelfth Corps. Shaler, coming promptly on the field, relieved the regiments of Kane's brigade, and Walker being forced to retire, General Johnson ordered Daniels over from his right. Daniels, Steuart, and O'Neal then again assaulted, their men coming up to within a short distance of the breastworks.

The regiments of Candy's brigade moved to the rear of Greene, having relieved his tired men, and the enemy was again driven back. Although persistently maintaining the attack, and in the effort sacrificing many men, Johnson had not been able to gain a foot of ground. Ruger pushed out into the woods some of the regiments of McDougall's brigade, on his left, taking the enemy in flank as he advanced, inflicting heavy loss on him, and materially assisting in repelling the assault.

About ten o'clock Ruger received orders to try the enemy, with two of his regiments, on the right of the line of breastworks to the left of the swale, and if practicable to force him out. Through an unfortunate mistake in transmitting orders, it was attempted to carry the position with these two regiments without first feeling the strength of the enemy. In consequence, the two regiments selected, the

Second Massachusetts and the Twenty-seventh Indiana, crossing the swale on their front under a murderous fire, their officers leading and cheering on the men, charged up the slope to the breastworks. Their ranks, however, before reaching there, had been so thinned by the sweeping fire of the enemy, Daniels's brigade, occupying the elevated and strong position on the spur of the hill, that it was impossible to dislodge him, and the two regiments, after having sustained enormous losses in officers and men, were ordered to retire. Colonel Mudge, of the Second Massachusetts, was killed in this charge.

In the meantime, upon Ruger's advancing the left of McDougall's brigade, it found the enemy had withdrawn from the stone wall on the summit; this they at once occupied. Geary and Ruger then pushed forward their whole line and forced the enemy out of the breastworks to the eastward. The Twelfth Corps now reoccupied and re-established their old line, the enemy retiring from under fire to Rock Creek.

Soon after Johnson's attack had begun, General Ewell had heard not only that Longstreet's attack on the left wing of the Federal army had not taken place, but that it would not take place for several hours. It was then, however, too late to recall Johnson, and his assault was allowed to proceed. Ewell now concluded that, as it had proved impossible to carry the strong position in his front, while, with no diversion in his favor, the enemy was at liberty to concentrate against him, he must desist from the attempt. Moreover, the Federal cavalry was now engaged in making strong demonstrations on his left, and already he had been obliged to detach Smith's brigade and one of Walker's regiments to oppose this advance. It was for these to him apparently good and sufficient reasons that Ewell then ordered the discontinuance of the attack from his front.¹

During the morning, while the attack just described was in progress, General Meade remained on the far right of the line, occasionally riding to various parts of the field, re-forming the troops and strengthening their positions. It was about this time that he took

¹ This is as far as Colonel Meade had prepared his account of the battle of Gettysburg at the time of his death, and the narrative which follows, of the subsequent events of the battle, has been written by the editor. The testimony of General Meade given before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, and the private correspondence of Colonel Meade with various officers present at the battle are the main sources from which the editor has drawn his information. For the use of the facts thus furnished the editor is alone responsible.

the first opportunity that had offered since the beginning of the battle to write the following short note to Mrs. Meade:

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
GETTYSBURG, 8.45 A. M., *July 3, 1863.*

All well and going on well with the Army. We had a great fight yesterday, the enemy attacking and we completely repulsing them; both Armies shattered. To-day at it again, with what result remains to be seen. Army in fine spirits and every one determined to do or die. George and myself well. Reynolds killed the first day. No other of your friends or acquaintances hurt.

About 9 A. M., the two following circulars were issued and forwarded to each corps:

July 3, 1863, 9.15 A. M.

Circular.

The Commanding General has observed that many men when their commands are not actively engaged, have their arms and equipments off. He therefore directs that Corps Commanders keep their troops under arms and in all respects equipped to move at a moment's notice.

July 3, 1863.

Circular.

The Commanding General directs that Corps Commanders cause all their stragglers and men absent from the ranks to be sent for and brought up. The utmost exertion is to be made by all, and every man must stand to the work.

The Ordnance officers should be required to see that all the arms and equipments scattered over the field are picked up and sent to the rear in the empty ammunition wagons.

To General French, who had come from Harpers Ferry with 7,000 men and who on July 1 had been halted by General Meade at Frederick City, Maryland, owing to the fact that he could not come up in time for the then expected battle, instructions were sent, through the chief of staff, from which the following is an extract: "The enemy attacked us vigorously yesterday and was repulsed on all sides. The conflict is apparently renewed to-day and we have re-

tained our position. Should the result of to-day's operation cause the enemy to fall back towards the Potomac, which you would probably learn by scouts and information from Hagerstown, etc., before you would be advised from here, he [Gen. Meade] desires that you will re-occupy Harpers Ferry and annoy and harass him [the enemy] in his retreat. It may be possible for you now to annoy and cut his communication with any cavalry or light marching infantry you have, of this you can judge. If the result of to-day's operation should be our discomfiture and withdrawal you are to look to Washington and throw your force there for its protection. You will be prepared for either of these contingencies should they arise."

To General Couch, at Harrisburg, who commanded the Volunteer force, which had been collected for the defence of that place, the following despatch was also sent from head-quarters: "I presume you are advised of condition of affairs here by copies of my dispatches to the General-in-Chief. The result of my operation may be the withdrawal of the rebel army. The sound of my guns for these three days, it is taken for granted is all the additional order or notice you need to come on. Should the enemy withdraw, by prompt co-operation we might destroy him. Should he overpower me, your return and defence of Harrisburg and the Susquehanna is not at all endangered."

By ten o'clock in the morning of the 3d it could be plainly seen, from the Union lines, that the enemy were massing their artillery along Seminary Ridge from the town of Gettysburg to the Peach Orchard. To meet this move General Hunt, chief of artillery, placed in position along Cemetery Ridge all the batteries that the ground could hold, and, beginning on the right, instructed the chiefs of artillery and battery commanders to withhold their fire for fifteen or twenty minutes after the enemy had commenced, and then to concentrate with all possible accuracy on those batteries which were causing the greatest damage and to fire slowly, so that when the enemy's ammunition was exhausted their own would still be sufficient to meet the anticipated assault.

General Meade discussed with General Hancock the probability of an attack by the enemy on the centre of the Union line, and decided, in the event of such an attack being made and repulsed, to advance the Fifth and Sixth Corps against the enemy's flank.

After the affair on the right of the line had been settled, General Meade returned to his head-quarters, and, at the urgent solicitation

of General Gibbon, visited the latter's head-quarters in the field just south of his own, where he partook of a hasty breakfast.

Immediately afterward he visited General Hay's division and then rode down the line to Round Top, stopping on the way at Generals Newton's and Sedgwick's head-quarters. From Little Round Top, in company with General Warren, he examined the enemy's lines and observed their long line of batteries and the massing of their troops, sure indications of the attack that was to follow. He immediately after returned to his own head-quarters.

Every movement that the enemy might make had been considered, every contingency anticipated and prepared for. Thus it has been seen that the independent forces at Frederick City, Maryland, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, under General French and General Couch, respectively, which were to act in conjunction with the Army of the Potomac, had been advised of the condition of affairs, and instructed how to act. The Union lines had been inspected, the positions strengthened, and circulars containing instructions for getting the troops well in hand sent to the various corps commanders. Instructions had also been given on the previous day, through the chief of staff, to obtain information in regard to the roads and country to the rear, so that the army could be moved quickly in case it was manœuvred out of its position by a flank movement of the enemy. Such a flank movement of the enemy to their right toward the Potomac, it may be remarked in passing, was the one Longstreet had actually advised Lee to make, and the one that Meade afterward said was sound military sense and the step he at the time feared Lee would take. It has also been seen that on the previous night, in conversation with General Gibbon at the close of the meeting of the corps commanders, General Meade expressed the opinion that if Lee attacked him tomorrow, he (Lee) would try the centre. During the morning he had seen the movements of the artillery along Seminary Ridge, and at noon he had seen from Little Round Top the massing of the enemy's forces opposite the centre of his line.

The two armies at this time, 1 P. M., held the same position as in the early morning, excepting as follows:¹ On the Confederate side, Pickett had moved up under cover of the ridge that extends along the Emmettsburg Pike, and the artillery had been concentrated along Seminary Ridge about the centre of the Confederate line. On the Union side, part of the Twelfth Corps, on the right, after the repulse of Johnson, reoccupied their original position as on the day be-

¹See Map No. 20, July 3, 1 P. M.

fore, and the artillery had been placed in position along Cemetery Ridge.

About one o'clock, just after General Meade had returned to his head-quarters from Little Round Top, the enemy opened fire along their whole front with all the artillery which they had concentrated along Seminary Ridge. The Federal artillery withheld its fire for a few minutes until it was able to locate the position of the enemy's batteries, and then replied with every gun which could be brought to bear from Cemetery Ridge. This cannonade lasted almost two hours. The enemy's fire was directed mainly at the left centre of the Union line. The intensity and fierceness of the cannonade, the hail of shot and bursting shell which swept and tore along Cemetery Ridge proper, and the damage done thereby beggar description; while even back of the ridge in the rear, where the reserves were posted, immense havoc was wrought by that portion of the enemy's fire which was high and had cleared the crest. Here it was that the little farm-house, General Meade's head-quarters, just under the crest of the ridge, and in rear of the left centre, the point at which the enemy's fire was directed, received too its share of destruction. One shell burst in the yard among the staff horses tied to the fence, another tore up the steps of the house, another carried away the supports of the porch, one passed through the door, another through the garret, and a solid shot barely grazing the commanding general as he stood in the open door-way, buried itself in a box by the door at his side.

The little building was so exposed that it was deemed best to avoid, if possible, the needless danger from flying splinters of wood or falling timber, and accordingly the general and his staff withdrew to the fenced yard in the immediate rear, where the work of directing the battle was resumed. At this juncture an amusing incident occurred, typical of the lighter vein which often comes to brave men in battle. During this rain of Confederate shell, and while Meade, deep in thought, was walking calmly up and down this little backyard between the house and the Taneytown Road, he chanced to notice that some of his staff, during the enforced inactivity while awaiting the pleasure of their general, were gradually, and probably unconsciously, edging around to the lee side of the house. "Gentlemen," he said, stopping and smiling pleasantly, "are you trying to find a safe place? You remind me of the man who drove the ox-team which took ammunition for the heavy guns on to

the field of Palo Alto. Finding himself within range, he tilted up his cart and got behind it. Just then General Taylor came along, and seeing this attempt at shelter, shouted, 'You damned fool, don't you know you are no safer there than anywhere else?' The driver replied, 'I don't suppose I am, general, but it kind o' feels so.'"

During all the time of the cannonade orders were being sent from head-quarters to take troops from every part of the line from which they could be spared and to place them in reserve for the support of that part of the line which the enemy's artillery fire indicated was about to be assaulted.

A staff-officer was sent to General Slocum, who commanded the extreme right of the line, with a message directing him to make his line as thin as possible and to send all the troops he could possibly spare to reinforce and strengthen that part of the line extending to the left of Cemetery Hill. Robinson's division of the First Corps, which had been held in reserve behind Cemetery Hill, was moved into the line on the right of the Second Corps. Shaler's brigade of the Sixth Corps, which had been moved in the morning to the support of the Twelfth Corps, was returned to the rear and left of the Second Corps, and held in reserve. Sherrill's brigade of the Second Corps, which was being held in reserve, was thrown forward into the line of the Second Corps. Two brigades of the First Division of the Third Corps, which were held in reserve on the left of the line, were moved to the right, and held in reserve in the rear of the left of the Second Corps. Three brigades of Humphreys's division of the Third Corps were moved over from the left into the line in reserve on the left of the First Corps. Eustis's brigade of the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, which formed part of the line at the foot of Little Round Top, was moved to the rear of the Second Corps, in reserve. Russell's brigade of the Sixth Corps was moved from the extreme left to the rear of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. Bartlett, with two brigades of the Sixth Corps which formed part of the line of the Fifth Corps, was thrown forward to the Wheat Field.

The firing being still unabated and it being evident that no staff-officer could reach head-quarters from any of the corps commanders, it was deemed advisable to retire to a point where communication between it and corps commanders could be had with greater certainty, and accordingly it was moved to a barn several hundred yards down the Taneytown Road. While here, one of the enemy's shells ex-

ploded, a fragment of which struck General Butterfield, the chief of staff, who immediately left the field and did not return that day.

General Meade and staff remained at this point a short time, and then removed to General Slocum's head-quarters on Powers Hill.

When the cannonade had continued for over an hour, and General Meade had become fully satisfied of its object, he directed the artillery to cease firing, not only in order to save its ammunition but also at the same time to make the enemy believe that they had silenced his guns and so lure them on to the assault.

Meanwhile, before this order had reached them, General Hunt, chief of artillery, had himself given orders to cease firing. It is necessary to go back somewhat to explain how Hunt came to give these orders.

It will be recalled that at 10 A. M., before the Confederate batteries had opened, General Hunt, starting on the right of the Union artillery, had given orders to withhold its fire for fifteen or twenty minutes after the enemy had commenced. He had just given his orders to the last battery on Little Round Top, when the enemy opened with all his guns. Hunt then rode to the artillery reserve to order fresh batteries and ammunition to be sent up to the ridge as soon as the enemy's cannonade should cease. He then returned to the ridge and inspected the batteries. The fire had been steady and deliberate, and had lasted for a long time, and when, on inspecting the chests, he found that the ammunition was running low, he hastened to General Meade to advise its immediate cessation and to make preparation for the assault which he also believed would certainly follow. Arriving at the old head-quarters, he found them abandoned and was told that General Meade had gone to Cemetery Hill, but being unable to locate him there, he at once rode back along the ridge, himself ordering the firing to cease. He then went to meet the fresh batteries which he had ordered up, and, encountering Major Bingham, of Hancock's staff, was informed that General Meade's aides were seeking him with orders to "cease firing," which, as we have seen, he had anticipated.

Shortly after the Federal artillery slackened its fire, the enemy ceased firing, and then at about 3 P. M. began the memorable assault, "Pickett's charge." The attacking force, its front extending over a mile, consisted of about eighteen thousand men, and was composed of Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps and various brigades from Pender's, Heth's, and Anderson's divisions of Hill's

corps. It was directed against the left centre of the Union line, the centre striking the Second Division on the left of the line of the Second Corps.

Just as this attack was commencing, after he had made all his arrangements for the disposition of the troops to reinforce the line for the anticipated attack, and while he was on Powers Hill or just started on his way to the front to assume immediate command, if necessary, General Meade was told by Captain Dewey, who had been sent by General Hays, that the enemy were advancing in great force. He at once despatched two staff-officers to the left of the line to hurry those brigades of the Sixth Corps which had already been ordered up, and then, going straight to the front, arrived on the crest at the point where the enemy were making their attack, and rode among the batteries and troops encouraging the men by his voice and presence. He remained on the ridge throughout the attack, and until the enemy was repulsed. The reinforcements which had been concentrated were thrown in along the line as they were needed, and after a terrible and protracted struggle, culminating in a bloody hand-to-hand encounter, the enemy was repulsed and driven back with heavy loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners. During this fight General Hancock, commanding the left centre of the line, was severely wounded and taken off the field, as was also General Gibbon, commanding the Second Corps.

Meanwhile, during the time of Lee's assault, General Gregg had won an extremely important cavalry engagement with General Stuart on the right of the Union line of battle. While Stuart was proceeding toward the Baltimore Pike, where he hoped to create a diversion in aid of the Confederate infantry, and, in case of Pickett's success, to fall upon the retreating Federal troops, he encountered Gregg, who was guarding the right flank of the Federal army, and was well out in the path of Stuart's movement. The contest was fast and furious, with the result that Stuart was compelled to fall back.

Immediately after the repulse of Pickett's assault General Meade rode over to Cemetery Hill to see the state of affairs. On his way back at what is called Ziegler's Grove, a point on the line between the Second and Eleventh Corps, the soldiers and officers commenced to cheer him and made such a demonstration that he crossed over the line of battle, and accompanied by his staff and a large crowd of mounted officers who had gathered about him, rode down in front of

the Union line all the way to Round Top. Every man on the Union line mounted the breastworks, and it was one continuous ovation the whole way down, and, strange to say, not a shot was fired by the enemy, although the cavalcade was in easy range.

It is quite imperative to call attention here to the great loss to the commanding general in the death of Reynolds on the first day, and the wounding of Hancock on the third. These two generals had no equals in the Army of the Potomac, and their loss could not be repaired. They were soldiers of marked ability, and, thoroughly understanding the temperament of their troops, could perform prodigies of war when the occasion demanded. They were quick to see and report the situation of the moment, and being in perfect sympathy and accord with General Meade, and having his full confidence, their loss greatly hampered the subsequent movements of the army and the execution of his intentions and plans.

General Meade's purpose in going to the left of the line to Round Top, as he explained in his testimony given before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, nine months after the battle, was as follows: "As soon as the assault was repulsed, I went immediately to the extreme left of my line, with the determination of advancing the left, and making an assault upon the enemy's lines. So soon as I arrived at the left I gave the necessary orders for the pickets and skirmishers in front to be thrown forward to feel the enemy, and for all preparations to be made for the assault. The great length of the line, and the time required to carry these orders out to the front, and the movement subsequently made, before the report given to me of the condition of the forces in the front and left, caused it to be so late in the evening as to induce me to abandon the assault which I had contemplated."

The length of time required to carry and execute the orders as above referred to was probably due to the fact that the brigades of the various corps had become more or less separated and the men had become utterly worn out and exhausted.

The Fifth and Sixth Corps were on the left of the Union line, and about the time of the repulse of Pickett's assault their brigades occupied the following positions:

The Fifth Corps held the Round Tops. The First Brigade of the First Division was on Big Round Top, extending toward Little Round Top. The Third Brigade of the Third Division was on Little Round Top, on the right of the First Brigade of the First Division.

The Third Brigade of the Second Division was on the north slope of Little Round Top, on the right of the Third Brigade of the Third Division. To the right of the Third Brigade of the Second Division came a brigade of the Sixth Corps, and to the right of it was the Second Brigade of the First Division of the Fifth Corps. The First and Second Brigades of the Second Division of the Fifth Corps were in the rear of Little Round Top, in reserve. The Third Brigade of the First Division was in the rear of the right of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. The First Brigade of the Third Division was out in front, toward the Peach Orchard.

The Sixth Corps was theoretically in reserve, but, like many of the corps in the line, its brigades occupied various positions on the field. The Second Brigade of the Second Division held the extreme left of the Union line from Big Round Top to the Taneytown Road. The First Brigade of the First Division was on the line between the the Third Brigade of the Second Division and the Second Brigade of the First Division of the Fifth Corps. The Third Brigade of the First Division was on the Taneytown Road in rear of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. The Second Brigade of the First Division and the Third Brigade of the Third Division were out in front of the Wheat Field. The First and Second Brigades of the Third Division were in the rear of the Second Corps, in reserve. The Third Brigade of the Second Division was on the extreme right of the Union line on Rock Creek.

This separation of the brigades was due to the numerous movements of the troops during the battle. Many of the troops had been moved from one part of the line to another, having been put in action in two different parts of the line on the same day. This handling of the troops brought forth from those present the admiring comment that such tactics had never before been seen in the Army of the Potomac.

Notwithstanding the fact that the contemplated assault had been abandoned on account of darkness, the pickets and skirmishers continued their advance, but soon found that the enemy was in force.

At 8.35 P. M. on the evening of the 3d, General Meade sent his report to Major-General Halleck, at Washington, from which the following is an extract:

"After the repelling of the assault, indications leading to the belief that the enemy might be withdrawing, an armed reconnoissance was pushed forward from the left, and the enemy found to be in force. At the present hour all is quiet. My cavalry have been

engaged all day on both flanks of the enemy, harassing and vigorously attacking with great success, notwithstanding they encountered superior numbers both of cavalry and infantry."

The "armed reconnoissance" above referred to on the left of the Federal line had effectually demonstrated the fact that the enemy were not only far from demoralized, but were, in fact, in strong force, and had not yet decided to give up the field. General Meade did not believe that Lee would attack him again, but was as yet uncertain whether he (Lee) would assume a defensive attitude and await an attack from him, or whether he would withdraw down the Cumberland Valley, holding strongly the mountain passes which he (Meade) understood had been fortified.

As the old head-quarters house, which had been abandoned during the cannonade in the afternoon, was now being used as a field hospital, General Meade and staff moved down the Taneytown Road about a quarter of a mile and slept among the rocks in the open. Toward two or three o'clock in the morning it commenced to rain violently and continued all day.

V

THE FOURTH DAY

At daybreak on the morning of July 4, the reports that came in showed that the enemy had disappeared from the front of the extreme right of the line, but that he still was in force on the left and left centre. General Slocum, in command of the right, was immediately directed to advance his corps, and ascertain the position of the enemy. Likewise, General Howard, in the centre, was directed to push into Gettysburg to see whether the enemy still occupied the town.

At the first sign of the enemy's withdrawal and before anything definite was known of their intention, the following order was sent to General French at Frederick City in order to gain time in case the enemy were actually withdrawing:

"The Major General Commanding directs that you proceed immediately, and seize and hold the South Mountain passes with such forces as in your judgment are proper and sufficient to prevent the enemy's seizing them to cover his retreat. With the balance of your force re-occupy Maryland Heights and operate upon the contingency expressed yesterday in regards to the retreat of the enemy. General Buford will probably pass through South Mountain tomorrow P. M. from this side."

At 5 A. M. after the enemy retired from the town of Gettysburg, General Barlow, who had been wounded in the first day's fight and left in the town, and whose opportunities for judging were considered of the best, sent word to General Meade that he believed their withdrawal was nothing more than a feint.

At 7 A. M. the following despatch was sent to Major-General Halleck, at Washington:

"This morning the enemy has withdrawn his pickets from the positions of yesterday. My own pickets are moving out to ascertain the nature and extent of the enemy's movement. My informa-

tion is not sufficient for me to decide its character yet, whether a retreat or manœuvre for other purposes."

At 8.30 A. M. the following despatch was sent Major-General Couch, at Harrisburg:

"The enemy has withdrawn from his positions occupied for attack. I am not yet sufficiently informed of the nature of his movement. He was repulsed yesterday in his attack upon me. You will, therefore, be governed by the instructions heretofore sent you. Until I get further information I cannot decide as to the character of the movement or the enemy's intentions."

After General Slocum and General Howard had pushed forward their lines to ascertain the position and intention of the enemy, they reported that he had retired from the circular position which he had occupied around the right of the Army of the Potomac, and had taken up a position about parallel to the left and left centre of the Union line. It now appearing that the enemy was not retreating, General Meade sent the following to General French at 10.20 A. M.:

"More recent developments indicate that the enemy may have retired to take a new position and await an attack from us. The General countermands his dispatch requiring you to re-occupy Maryland Heights and seize the South Mountain passes, resuming the instructions contained in the dispatch of July 3rd, making your movements contingent upon those of the enemy."

At this juncture, in order to learn the condition and position of the troops after the past three days' hard fighting and manœuvring, and to get them in shape for subsequent movements, circulars were sent to all the corps commanders directing them as follows:

July 4, 1863.

Circular.

Corps Commanders will report the present position of the troops under their command in their immediate front—location, etc., amount of supplies on hand and condition. The intention of the Major General Commanding is not to make any present move, but to refit and rest for to-day. The opportunity must be made use of to get the commands well in hand, and ready for such duties as the General may direct. The lines as held are not to be changed without orders; the skirmishers simply being advanced according to instructions given to find and report the position and lines of the enemy.

*July 4, 1863.***Circular.**

Corps commanders will retain their men in camp and hold their present lines ready for any movement. The movement of skirmishers to the front is not intended to change the positions or less vigilance of the troops.

*July 4, 1863.***Circular.**

General Head-Quarters, until further orders, are established on the Baltimore pike, about a mile below the point occupied by Maj. Gen. Slocum, during the recent engagement, as his Head-Quarters. Corps Commanders will send an orderly with the bearer of this circular to acquaint himself with the exact location of Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.***Circular.**

Corps Commanders will at once call upon their regimental commanders for a statement of the colors that have been taken from the enemy in front of Gettysburg, and all such colors will be sent to these Head-Quarters, as required by existing orders. If any colors have been sent to the rear or otherwise passed out of the possession of regimental commanders, such commanders will be called on for an immediate explanation of their disobedience of orders, and they will take immediate measures to have the colors returned to their custody and sent to these Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.***Circular.**

Corps Commanders will detail burial parties to bury all the enemy's dead in the vicinity of their lines. Correct accounts of the numbers buried will be kept, and returns made through Corps Head-Quarters to the Asst. Adj't Gen'l. The arms, accoutrements, etc., will all be collected and turned over to the Ordnance officers. Reports of the number and kind of each picked up will be reported to these Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.***Circular.**

A return of the small arm ammunition on hand per man in each Corps is required. As the number of rounds of artillery ammunition

per gun. Corps Commanders will make their return without delay. Corps commanders will cause their Ordnance officers to gather the ammunition from the wounded and killed and replenish their supplies therewith.

At 12 N. General Meade again reported to Major-General Halleck:

"The position of affairs is not materially changed from my last dispatch 7 A. M. The enemy apparently has thrown back his left, and placed guns and troops in position in rear of Gettysburg, which we now hold. The enemy has abandoned large numbers of his killed and wounded on the field. I shall require some time to get up supplies, ammunition, etc., rest the army, worn out by long marches, and three days' hard fighting. I shall probably be able to give you a return of our captures and losses before night, and return of the enemy's killed and wounded in our hands."

During portions of the day it rained very violently, so violently, in fact, as to interrupt any very active operations that might have been made if any had been designed.

Nothing very definite having developed of the enemy's position and intended movements, General Meade (after a consultation with some of his corps commanders in the evening) directed General Warren to make a reconnoissance to ascertain the intentions of the enemy, and also sent General Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth Corps on the left of the line, the following order:

"The Major General Commanding directs that you hold your Corps in readiness to cover a reconnoissance by Brig. General Warren, such portions of it to be used as may be necessary, the object of the reconnoissance being to find out the position and movement of the enemy. Be ready at four and a half o'clock A. M. tomorrow."

Referring to the matter of consultations with his corps commanders, General Meade, before the committee on the conduct of the war, testified as follows:

"I had one on the night of the 4th of July, as to a plan of action in reference to pursuing the enemy. I never called those meetings councils; they were consultations, and they were probably more numerous and more constant in my case, from the fact that I had just assumed command of the army, and felt that it was due to myself to have the opinions of high officers before I took action on matters which involved such momentous issues."

At 10 P. M., and after all arrangements had been made as far as

possible for the day following, General Meade made a third report to General Halleck.

"No change of affairs since despatch of 12 noon. I make a reconnoissance tomorrow, to ascertain what the intention of the enemy is. My cavalry are now moving towards the South Mountain pass, and should the enemy retreat I shall pursue him on his flanks. A proposition made by Gen. Lee under flag of truce to exchange prisoners, was declined by me."

For over a year preceding the battle of Gettysburg Lee had enjoyed unhampered supreme command of the Army of Northern Virginia. At the moment of the battle he was conducting an invasion and was comparatively unrestricted as to the movements of his army, which was living off the country and sending home supplies. His troops were flushed with the pride of a successful campaign and confident of victory. On the other hand, Meade, the fifth to lead the Army of the Potomac, had been in command but three days before the battle. He was confronted with the double task of opposing the enemy and defending the capital of the country. His army was the only defence of the great cities of the North, he could look for no reinforcements, and he supposed his enemy to be his equal if not superior in numbers. His troops had confidence in themselves, but at the time he took command they were still laboring under the depressing effects of several defeats due to poor leadership. It can be fairly assumed that the slightest success on the part of Lee would have been successfully used to obtain recognition of the Confederacy from the powers abroad. The issue at stake was momentous; and, as General Meade expressed it in his letter of June 29, "a battle will decide the fate of our country and our cause."

General Meade testified before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war that his plan on the second day of the battle was as follows:

"I beg leave to say, in connection with this subject of attacking or receiving an attack, that I do not hesitate to say that it was my policy and intention to act upon the defensive, and receive the attack of the enemy, if practicable, knowing that the enemy would be compelled either to attack me or to retire from his position; that it was not within his power to wait any length of time in my front and manœuvre, and that the chances of victory on my side were greater if I acted on the defensive than they would be if I assumed the offensive." In

his next letter to his wife, on the 5th of July, he writes: "They [the enemy] waited one day [the 4th] expecting that, flushed with success, I would attack them, when they would play their old game of shooting us from behind breastworks—a game we played this time to their entire satisfaction."

In a word, Meade's masterful and rapid advance, and the defensive policy which he then assumed and to which he unswervingly adhered, gave Lee no alternative but to assume the offensive and overcome the Army of the Potomac, or else to retreat and admit himself defeated.

VI

THE MARCH FROM GETTYSBURG

At about three o'clock on the morning of July 5 the Sixth Corps, on the left of the line under General Sedgwick, began to break camp in preparation for the reconnoissance under General Warren, which had been arranged for on the evening before. At daylight the pickets of the Sixth Corps advanced to the front toward the right of the enemy's line, and on reaching the Emmettsburg Pike, found that he had withdrawn.

As soon as it was light enough to distinguish objects in the distance, reports began to come in from the signal stations along the line that many of the points which the day before had composed the enemy's front and reserve line could be distinctly seen and that there was no indication of the enemy anywhere except farther to the west. At that point could be seen quite a large body of troops apparently drawn up in line of battle extending from the Chambersburg Pike toward the Hagerstown Road.

Scouting parties were then sent out from along the whole line, who soon reported that the enemy had evacuated his former position.

Before it could be positively determined what the intentions of the enemy were, whether to retreat to the Potomac or simply to the mountains, and desirous of taking advantage of any time that might be gained, General Meade, through his chief of staff, at 7 A. M. sent to General French at Frederick City the following order:

July 5, 1863, 7 A. M.

MAJ. GEN. FRENCH,

The enemy appear to be in full retreat, and you can act upon the contingencies provided in previous dispatches.

After the advance of the pickets and skirmishers of the Sixth Corps, the First Division, followed by the others, crossed the valley in their front, and occupying the position held by the enemy the day before, opened fire with their artillery upon a body of the enemy

on their right. The latter force soon disappeared without replying, retreating to the rear.

Owing to information which he had previously received that the passes at Fairfield and Cashtown had been fortified by the enemy, and were of such a character that a small force could hold a large body in check for a considerable time, General Meade had made up his mind that a more rapid movement of his army could be made by the flank through the Boonsboro Pass than to attempt to follow on the road which the enemy himself had taken. In order to be fully prepared to move as soon as he could determine that the enemy were in full retreat for the Potomac, he directed that the following order for the movement of the various corps by way of Middletown and South Mountain toward Hagerstown should be drawn up, but not issued:

July 5, 1863.

Circular.

The following movements of troops are ordered:—

The 1st, 6th, and 3d Corps by Emmetsburg direct road to Mechanicstown, Lewistown, Hamburg, to Middletown.

The 5th and 11th Corps by the left hand Taneytown road through Emmetsburg, Cregerstown, Utica, High Knob Pass, to Middletown.

The 12th and 2d Corps via Taneytown, Middleburg, and Woodsborough, through Frederick, to Middletown.

The trains will move with their corps, those at Westminster crossing to Middletown via Frederick. The Artillery Reserve follow via Taneytown and Middleburg. Head-Quarters will be at Cregerstown to-night. The army will assemble at Middletown P. M. of the 7th inst.

Head-Quarters train will move at once. All trains not filled with ammunition and supplies will be sent to Frederick. The Commissary and Quartermaster depots and supplies at Westminster will be transferred to Frederick.

The Commandant of the Cavalry Corps will detail a regiment to report to the Provost Marshal General, for the temporary duty of driving up all stragglers, and collecting all captured property, arms, ammunition, etc., on the recent battle field.

The Medical Director will establish a General Hospital at Gettysburg for the wounded that cannot be moved with the army.

For the movement, and until the concentration at Middletown,

General Sedgwick will, without relinquishing command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the right—1st, 6th, and 3d.

General Slocum will, without relinquishing command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the left, 12th and 2d.

General Howard will, without relinquishing the command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the centre, 5th and 11th.

Staff officers will be sent to report at Head-Quarters each night on all marches.

The Battalion of Regular Engineers and other Troops at Westminster will proceed to Middletown via Frederick.

By command of Major General Meade,
(Sd.) S. WILLIAMS,
Asst. Adj. General.

ADDENDA TO ORDER OF MARCH OF JULY 5TH, 1863.

The Artillery Reserve will accompany the 2d and 12th Corps, and will be assigned by Major General Slocum to an appropriate place in the column.

From the reports of his officers General Meade was now thoroughly convinced that the enemy was actually retiring. He believed that he was passing into the Cumberland Valley but did not feel certain that he was in full retreat for the Potomac or sure of what his future movements would be. Nor was he entirely aware of the extent of the injury he had inflicted upon him at Gettysburg though satisfied that he had been severely punished. Accordingly he directed General Sedgwick, in the following order, to advance along the Hagerstown Road and to pursue him with vigor, and at the same time dispatched a cavalry force to follow the column that was retreating along the Chambersburg Road.

July 5, 1863, 12.30 P. M.

GENERAL SEDGWICK,

All the information I can obtain proves withdrawal of enemy through Cashtown and Fairfield Road. Push forward your column in W. direction; find out his force; if rear guard it will be compelled to retire; if not you'll find out. Time is of great importance, as I

can't give orders for a movement without explicit information from you. General Sykes will cover your withdrawal if necessary, and General Warren, who carries this, will read it to General Sykes.

Early in the afternoon General Meade sent the following report to General Halleck:

July 5, 1863.

MAJOR GENERAL HALLECK,

The enemy retired under cover of the night and heavy rain in the direction of Fairfield and Cashtown. All my available Cavalry are in pursuit on the enemy's left and rear. My movement will be made at once on his flank via Middletown and South Mountain Pass. I cannot give you the details of our capture in prisoners, colors and arms. Upwards of twenty battle flags will be turned in from one Corps. I cannot delay to pick up the debris of the battle field and request that all those arrangements may be made by the Departments. My wounded, with those of the enemy in our hands, will be left at Gettysburg. After burying our own, I am compelled to employ citizens to bury the enemy's dead. My Head-Quarters will be to-night at Cregerstown. Communication received from Gen. Smith, in command of 3,000 men, on the march from Carlisle towards Cashtown. Field returns last evening give me about 55,000 effectives in the ranks, exclusive of Cavalry, baggage guards, ambulance attendants, etc. Every available reinforcement is required and should be sent to Frederick without delay.

Under date of the 4th of July Meade announced to the army in a general order the victory over Lee.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 4, 1863.*

General Orders, No. 68.

The Commanding General, in behalf of the country, thanks the Army of the Potomac for the glorious result of the recent operations.

An enemy superior in numbers and flushed with the pride of a successful invasion, attempted to overcome and destroy this Army. Utterly baffled and defeated, he has now withdrawn from the contest. The privations and fatigue the Army has endured, and the heroic courage and gallantry it has displayed will be matters of history to be remembered.

Our task is not yet accomplished, and the Commanding General

looks to the Army for greater efforts to drive from our soil every vestige of the presence of the invader.

It is right and proper that we should, on all suitable occasions, return our grateful thanks to the Almighty Disposer of events, that in the goodness of His Providence He has thought fit to give victory to the cause of the just.

By command of Major General Meade.

Official.

S. WILLIAMS,

Asst. Adjt. Gen.

Later in the afternoon of the same day General Meade received a report from General Sedgwick that he was following the enemy's rear-guard as rapidly as he could, but that he had reason to believe, from reports of prisoners, that the main body of the enemy was in the vicinity of Fairfield Pass, and that it was not improbable that another engagement might be had in those mountains. Under these circumstances, and as a matter of security, and also being willing to meet such a movement on the part of the enemy, General Meade directed that two Corps, the Third and Fifth, be immediately moved in the direction of General Sedgwick, in order to assist him if he were attacked, or to reinforce him if he required reinforcement. After he had given this order he learned that the previous order, for the movement of the whole army, which he had prepared but withheld awaiting developments, had been issued by his chief of staff, General Butterfield, without his authority. Officers were immediately sent, who arrested the progress of the Third and First Corps, which had not moved very far, and detained them in case General Sedgwick should require support. The other corps he allowed to move on, knowing that they could not get very far that day, and that they could be recalled if the information obtained through General Sedgwick's operation should require it.

Later, at 6 P. M., the following report was sent to Major-General Halleck:

"I send copies of all my dispatches since yesterday A. M. My army is all in motion. I shall be at Frederick to-morrow night. I desire the forces mentioned in your dispatch to Gen. French to be thrown to Harper's Ferry by rail as soon as possible, and shall so instruct Gen. French. It is of importance to get possession of South Mountain passes and Maryland Heights."

Meanwhile, General Sedgwick with the Sixth Corps, in accord-

ance with the order sent him at 12.30 P. M., followed up the enemy along the Hagerstown Road. The First Brigade of the First Division was in the lead, marching in line of battle, covered by a heavy line of skirmishers, when, having gone about six miles and being about two miles from Fairfield, they came upon the rear-guard of the rebel army, which was posted so as to protect the passage of its trains. A sharp engagement ensued, resulting in the capture of about two hundred and fifty prisoners.

The Sixth Corps then continued on to Fairfield, the enemy retiring before it, where they remained, while General Neill, in command of his brigade of infantry and of McIntosh's brigade of cavalry with two pieces of light artillery and a battery of rifled pieces, was detached to move early the next morning to reconnoitre the enemy's position at the Gap.

After this encounter General Sedgwick reported to General Meade, which report he received at 6 P. M., that he had come upon the enemy, who had made a stand in force, and that he had ascertained from prisoners taken that McLaws's division was bringing up the rear of the rebel army with Alexander's artillery immediately in his (McLaws's) front, and that they were going to the Gap, where they intended making a stand.

On receiving the above information, the forward movement of the army was arrested by the issue of the following circulars and orders and the army held in its then position until further information could be obtained as to the probability of the enemy making a stand in force in the mountains:

July 5, 1863.

Circular.

The movement of troops ordered to-day and all arrangements dependent thereupon, are suspended until further orders.

July 5, 1863.

Circular.

Head-Quarters will be to-night at the same place as last night, instead of Cregerstown.

July 5, 1863.

Circular.

General Head-Quarters will move to-morrow at 6 A. M. precisely and be established at Frederick to-morrow night.

To General Sedgwick, commanding the right wing, the following was sent:

"I am directed by the Commanding General to say that, in consequence of your report of the appearance of the enemy in force in your front, the movement of troops ordered towards Middletown has been suspended, to await further information from you."

To General Howard, commanding the centre, and General Slocum, commanding the left wing, the following order was sent:

"In consequence of information received from General Sedgwick of the enemy in his presence, the movement ordered will be stopped where it is until further orders. Send a staff officer to these Headquarters to-night for orders."

During a lull in these operations General Meade took advantage of the opportunity thus offered to again write to Mrs. Meade.

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
GETTYSBURG, PA., *July 5, 1863.*

I hardly know when I last wrote to you, so many and such stirring events have occurred. I think I have written since the battle, but am not sure. It was a grand battle, and is in my judgment a most decided victory, though I did not annihilate or bag the Confederate Army. This morning they retired in great haste into the mountains, leaving their dead unburied and their wounded on the field. They awaited one day, expecting that, flushed with success, I would attack them when they would play their old game of shooting us from behind breastworks—a game we played this time to their entire satisfaction. The men behaved splendidly; I really think they are becoming soldiers. They endured long marches, short rations, and stood one of the most terrific cannonadings I ever witnessed. Baldy was shot again, and I fear will not get over it. Two horses that George rode were killed, his own and the black mare. I had no time to think of either George or myself, for at one time things looked a little blue; but I managed to get up reinforcements in time to save the day. The army are in the highest spirits, and of course I am a great man. The most difficult part of my work is acting without correct information on which to predicate action.

On the 5th Major-General Daniel Butterfield, chief of staff, was relieved from duty with the army and Brigadier-General Alfred Pleasanton, chief of cavalry, and Brigadier-General G. K. Warren,

chief of engineers, in connection with their own duties, jointly acted at times as chief of staff until the night of July 8, when Major-General A. A. Humphreys, commanding the Second Division of the Third Corps, was appointed.

On the night of July 5 the army occupied the following positions:¹ The Sixth Corps was at Fairfield, in touch with the enemy. The First and Third Corps were in the vicinity of Gettysburg, in support of the Sixth Corps. The Fifth and Eleventh Corps were south of Gettysburg, also in support of the Sixth Corps. The Second Corps was at Two Taverns and the Twelfth Corps at Littlestown. The cavalry was on both flanks of the army. Buford's division was at Frederick City, on its way to Boonsboro Pass. Kilpatrick's division and one brigade of Gregg's division was at Boonsboro. Two brigades of Gregg's division were just north of Cashtown and Fayetteville. The rear of the Confederate army occupied the Cashtown and Fairfield Passes.

At 2 A. M., on the morning of July 6, General Meade sent the following to General Sedgwick:

July 6, 1863, 2 A. M.

COMM. OFF. 6TH CORPS.

After conversation with General Warren,² I think under existing circumstances you had better push your reconnoissance so as to ascertain, if practicable, how far the enemy has retreated, and also the character of the Gap, and practicability of carrying the same. In case I should determine to advance on that line, you must be careful and watch your right and rear, as roads from Cashtown all open to the enemy to advance against you. My cavalry sent to Cashtown have not reported, but I have reason to believe that the enemy is there in force. I beg you will keep me fully advised of what occurs, and I desire you will report at least every two or three hours. Both the 1st and 3rd Corps are under your orders, and can be called to your support if you require them. I shall not move the army from its present position until I am better satisfied the enemy are evacuating the Cumberland Valley.

In obedience to orders, and in spite of the fact that the morning was very misty and dark, rendering it impossible to obtain correct information of the enemy's movements, General Neill, with his command, advanced and engaged their rear-guard.

¹ See Map No. 21, position night of July 5.

² General Warren had just returned from the front.

At 8.30 A. M. General Meade received the following despatch from General Sedgwick:

"Since sending my dispatch a few minutes since, upon consultation with General Wright, who agrees with me, that considering everything I would strongly advise moving this Corps to Emmettsburg, or on that road. This advice might be modified after hearing further from General Neill, but I cannot think it will change the circumstances. Their line, General, is evidently very strong, and I do not like to dash my Corps against it, especially as I do not know what is on my right. Cashtown is in rear of us:—perhaps it would be well to push out a Corps for two or three miles—to watch."

In answer to the above General Meade immediately sent the following reply at 9 A. M.:

"Your dispatch is received, proposing to move to Emmettsburg. I cannot, at present, approve of the proposition. I advised you last night that you could call to your support Newton and Birney, who are under your orders. Newton reporting to me that he and Birney had moved under your orders on the Emmettsburg Road (and your dispatch saying you had not sent orders to them) I immediately directed them to halt, to report their positions to you and await your orders. I have also directed General Howard (who commands 5th and 11th Corps) to post one of his Corps at Emmettsburg, and the other on some road leading to Fairfield from whence it can be thrown up there.

"With this disposition, viz.: three Corps under your immediate command, and two within support together with the fact just reported that our Cavalry have passed through Cashtown without opposition, and were at Caledonia Iron Works (N. W. from Fairfield some 11 miles) I am of the opinion that you are in a measure secure on your right flank and rear and therefore can examine the front.

"All evidence seems to show a movement to Hagerstown and the Potomac. No doubt the principal force is between Fairfield and Hagerstown, but I apprehend they will be likely to let you alone if you let them alone. Let me know the result of Neill's operation, whether they retire before him or threaten to push him and you. Send out pickets well on your left flank, reconnoiter in all directions, and let me know the result.

"This is all the instructions I can now give you. Whenever I am

satisfied that the main body is retiring from the mountains I shall continue my flank movement. I am going to direct Couch to move down the Cumberland Valley, to threaten their rear."

About noon General Meade received a report from General Sedgwick saying that he had pushed the enemy's rear-guard as far as Fairfield Pass, which was of such a nature that a very small force placed there could hold him in check for a considerable length of time, though he could finally take it, and that, in his judgment, it would involve delay and waste of time to endeavor to push the enemy any farther on that road.

At 2 P. M., soon after receiving the above, the following report was received from General Sedgwick:

"I am satisfied that Hood's Div. with one battery hold the Gap to cover the trains and that Ewell's whole (Div.) is on the mountains. I think they will withdraw to-night. Mr. McKenzie will give you the result of Neill's operation. Howe has gone up with his whole Div. I shall hold on until further orders. I think Newton and Birney should be a little nearer, but I cannot believe the enemy will attack me and therefore do not wish to fatigue the troops by unnecessary marching. I have just sent in one hundred prisoners, a few more have since been taken. When a general movement takes place will you please send orders to Newton or Birney direct as I am so far away from them that time would be lost in communicating with them."

Upon receiving the above, General Meade decided to move the whole army down toward Middletown, and accordingly issued the following order:

July 6, 1863.

Orders.

Commanders and other Independent commands, and Chiefs of Staff Departments, will at once proceed to carry into effect the orders of march of July 5th, temporarily suspended. Head-Quarters will be to-night at the same place as last night and to-morrow at Frederick.

By Command of Major General Meade,
(Sd.) S. WILLIAMS, *Asst. Adj. Genl.*

Immediately upon the issue of this order, General Meade sent at 2 P. M. the following report to General Halleck, at Washington:

"Yesterday I sent General Sedgwick with the 6th Corps in pursuit of the enemy towards Fairfield and a brigade of cavalry

towards Cashtown. General Sedgwick's report indicating a large force of the enemy in the mountains, I deemed it prudent to suspend the movement to Middletown until I could be certain the enemy were evacuating Cumberland Valley. I find great difficulty in getting reliable information, but from all I can learn I have reason to believe the enemy is retiring, very much crippled and hampered with his trains. Gen. Sedgwick reported that the Gap at Fairfield was very formidable and would enable a small force to hold my column in check for a long time. I have accordingly resumed the movement to Middletown, and I expect by to-morrow night to assemble the army in that vicinity. Supplies will be then forwarded, and as soon as possible I will cross South Mountain and proceed in search of the enemy.

"Your dispatch requiring me to assume the general command of the forces in the field under Gen. Couch has been received. I know nothing of the position or strength of his command except the advance under Gen. Smith which I have ordered here and which I desire should furnish a necessary force to guard this place while the enemy is in the vicinity. A brigade of infantry and one of cavalry with two batteries will be left to watch the enemy at Fairfield and follow them whenever they vacate the Gap. I shall send general instructions to Gen. Couch to move down the Cumberland Valley as far as the enemy evacuated it and keep up communication with me but from all the information I can obtain I do not rely on any active co-operation in battle with this force. If I can get the Army of the Potomac in hand in the valley and the enemy have not crossed the river, I shall give him battle, trusting should misfortune overtake me, that sufficient number of my force, in connection with what you have in Washington, would reach that place so as to render it secure.

"General Trimble of the Confederate Army, was to-day found wounded just outside of Gettysburg. Gen. Hemper was found mortally wounded on the road to Fairfield, and a large number of wounded estimated at several thousand. Gens. Heth, Wade, Hampton, Jenkins and Pender are reported wounded.

"The losses of the enemy were no doubt very great, and he must be proportionally crippled. My Head-Quarters will be here to-night and to-morrow I expect to be at Frederick. My cavalry have been attacking the enemy on both flanks inflicting as much injury as possible."

At 5 P. M. a still further report was received from General Sedgwick, which follows:

"The enemy have withdrawn all but one regt. which is now retiring;—our skirmishers are following. I will move up to the Gap and send out a small force rapidly to observe their future movements. My main force I will move to the other side of Fairfield and await orders."

It is evident from the above despatch, which was sent by General Sedgwick at 3.25 P. M., that he had not yet received the order to again take up the march, and accordingly the following message was sent him:

"You will take every precaution to maintain the position you now hold till dark. You will then withdraw all the 6th Corps, except Gen. Neill's brigade and a rifled battery and proceed with your command (the 1st and 3d Corps included) to execute the order of march of July 5th. Gen. Neill will follow the enemy cautiously as he (the enemy) retires, keeping the com'dg. General constantly informed. The commander of the rifled battery will report to him. Col. McIntosh with his brigade of cavalry will be directed to report also to Gen. Neill. Gen. Newton has been halted near Emmettsburg. Gen. Birney has not moved from this place. You will issue orders to them to execute the order of march when you think proper. Gen. Meade does not think proper to do so himself, as circumstances may compel you to call them to your aid or to retire in some order that you alone can determine. Head-Quarters will be to-night the same place as last night."

Some of the corps, having received, in time to start that day, the order to again take up the flank movement, had moved out; and on the night of July 6 the army occupied the following positions:¹

The First Corps was at Emmettsburg. The Second Corps was at Two Taverns. The Third was at Gettysburg. The Fifth between Gettysburg and Emmettsburg. The Sixth and Eleventh also at Emmettsburg, and the Twelfth Corps was at Littlestown. The cavalry was spread out on both flanks of the army. Buford's division was between Boonsboro and Williamsport, with Kilpatrick's division and one brigade of Gregg's division on its right. One brigade of Gregg's division was a few miles south of Chambersburg, and another brigade at Fairfield.

The enemy were supposed to be retiring down the Cumberland Valley between Fairfield and Hagerstown toward the Potomac.

¹See Map No. 22, position night of July 6.

Let us now turn to the Confederate army to see what its actual position was at the close of each of the first two days of its retreat from the field of Gettysburg.

On the night of July 5—that is to say, about the same time that the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac was at Fairfield, and General Sedgwick had reported that he believed the Confederates were going to make a stand—the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia was concentrated in the mountains in the vicinity of Fairfield.¹ Ewell with his corps of infantry occupied the passes at Cashtown and Fairfield. Longstreet with his whole corps was on Ewell's right, and Hill with his three divisions was in the rear in support. The cavalry under Stuart was guarding both flanks of the army.

Meanwhile, it will be remembered the Army of the Potomac had been halted by the suspension of the order to concentrate at Middletown until further information could be gained as to the probability of the enemy making a stand in force in the mountains.

On the 6th Lee again retreated, and by night Longstreet, in the advance, was about to enter Hagerstown followed by Ewell at Waynesboro.² Hill, bringing up the rear, had not yet left the mountains. The cavalry continued guarding the flanks.

The Army of the Potomac in the meantime had received the order to again take up the flank movement, and by the morning of the 7th of July the whole army was in motion.

¹See Map No. 23, position night of July 5, No. 2.

²See Map No. 24, position night of July 6, No. 2.

PART VI
CIVIL WAR LETTERS
1863-1865

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

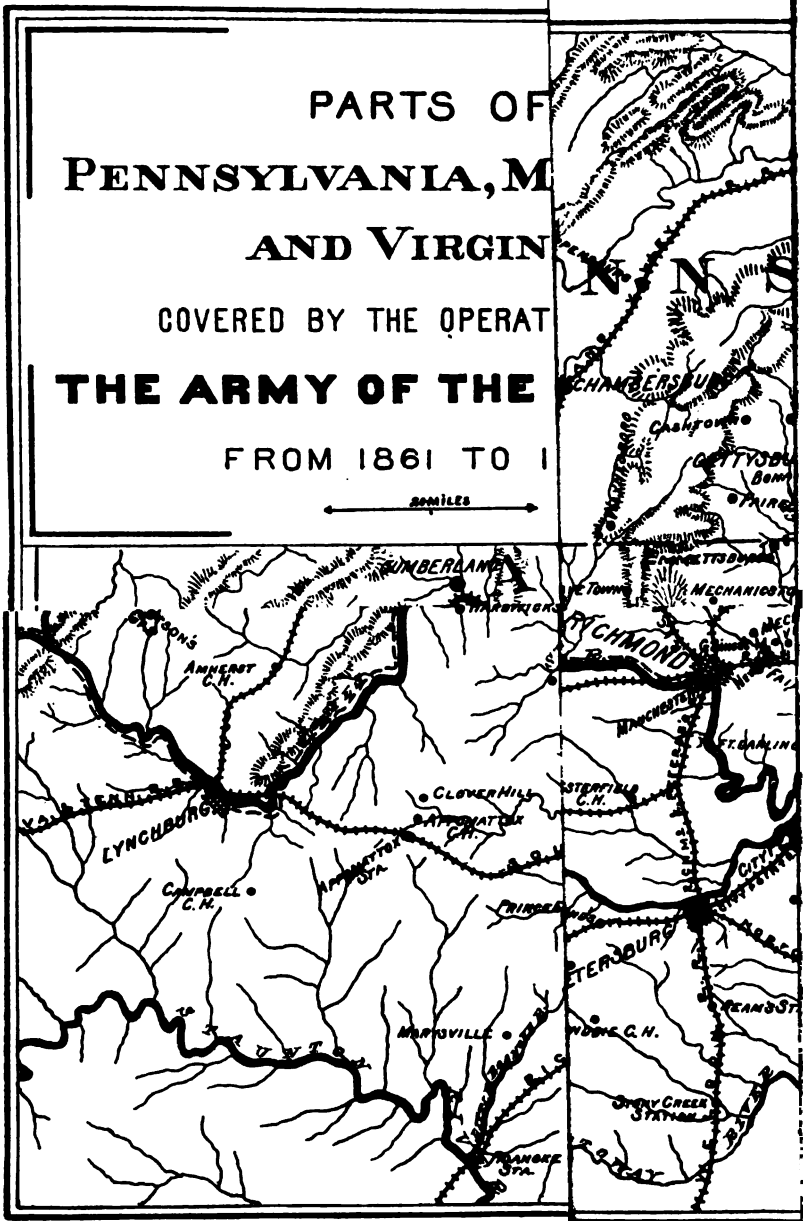
HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, FREDERICK, *July 8, 1863.*

I arrived here yesterday; the army is assembling at Middletown. I think we shall have another battle before Lee can cross the river, though from all accounts he is making great efforts to do so. For my part, as I have to follow and fight him, I would rather do it at once and in Maryland than to follow into Virginia. I received last evening your letters of the 3d and 5th inst., and am truly rejoiced that you are treated with such distinction on account of my humble services. I see also that the papers are making a great deal too much fuss about me. I claim no extraordinary merit for this last battle, and would prefer waiting a little while to see what my career is to be before making any pretensions. I did and shall continue to do my duty to the best of my abilities, but knowing as I do that battles are often decided by accidents, and that no man of sense will say in advance what their result will be, I wish to be careful in not bragging before the right time. George¹ is very well, though both of us are a good deal fatigued with our recent operations. From the time I took command till to-day, now over ten days, I have not changed my clothes, have not had a regular night's rest, and many nights not a wink of sleep, and for several days did not even wash my face and hands, no regular food, and all the time in a great state of mental anxiety. Indeed, I think I have lived as much in this time as in the last thirty years. Old Baldy is still living and apparently doing well; the ball passed within half an inch of my thigh, passed through the saddle and entered Baldy's stomach. I did not

¹ Son of General Meade.

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think he could live, but the old fellow has such a wonderful tenacity of life that I am in hopes he will.

The people in this place have made a great fuss with me. A few moments after my arrival I was visited by a deputation of ladies, and showers of wreaths and bouquets presented to me, in most complimentary terms. The street has been crowded with people, staring at me, and, much to my astonishment, I find myself a lion. I cannot say I appreciate all this honor, because I feel certain it is undeserved, and would like people to wait a little while. I send you a document¹ received yesterday afternoon. It will give you pleasure I know. Preserve it, because the terms in which the General in Chief speaks of the battle are stronger than any I have deemed it proper to use myself. I never claimed a victory, though I stated that Lee was defeated in his efforts to destroy my army. I am going to move as soon as I can get the army supplied with subsistence and ammunition.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
SOUTH MOUNTAIN PASS, *July 10, 1863.*

I have been so busy I could not write. You must depend on George² for letters.

Lee has not crossed and does not intend to cross the river, and I expect in a few days, if not sooner, again to hazard the fortune of war. I know so well that this is a fortune and that accidents, etc., turn the tide of victory, that, until the question is settled, I cannot but be very anxious. If it should please God again to give success to our efforts, then I could be more tranquil. I also see that my success at Gettysburg has deluded the people and the Government with the idea that I must always be victorious, that Lee is demoralized and disorganized, etc., and other delusions which will not only be dissipated by any reverse that I should meet with, but would react in proportion against me. I have already had a very decided correspondence with General Halleck upon this point, he pushing me on, and I informing him I was advancing as fast as I could. The firm stand I took had the result to induce General Halleck to tell me to act according to my judgment.³ I am of opinion that Lee is in a strong position and determined to fight before he crosses the river.

¹ For document mentioned, see Appendix A. ² Son of General Meade.

³ For correspondence between Halleck and Meade see Appendix B.

I believe if he had been able to cross when he first fell back, that he would have done so; but his bridges being destroyed, he has been compelled to make a stand, and will of course make a desperate one. The army is in fine spirits, and if I can only manage to keep them together, and not be required to attack a position too strong, I think there is a chance for me. However, it is all in God's hands. I make but little account of myself, and think only of the country.

The telegram I sent you was because I could not write, and I thought it would make you easy to know we were well. George,¹ I suppose, has written you what a narrow escape he had. I never knew of it till last night. His horse was struck with a piece of shell, killing him, and coming so near George as to carry away a part of the back of his saddle. This was on the 3d, just after we had repulsed the last assault, when I rode up to the front, and George was the only officer with me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 14, 1863.*

I found Lee in a very strong position, intrenched. I hesitated to attack him, without some examination of the mode of approaching him. I called my corps commanders together, and they voted against attacking him. This morning, when I advanced to feel his position and seek for a weak point, I found he had retired in the night and was nearly across the river. I immediately started in pursuit, and my cavalry captured two thousand prisoners, two guns, several flags, and killed General Pettigrew. On reporting these facts to General Halleck, he informed me the President was very much dissatisfied at the escape of Lee. I immediately telegraphed I had done my duty to the best of my ability, and that the expressed dissatisfaction of the President I considered undeserved censure, and asked to be immediately relieved. In reply he said it was not intended to censure me, but only to spur me on to an active pursuit, and that it was not deemed sufficient cause for relieving me.² This is exactly what I expected; unless I did impracticable things, fault would be found with me. I have ignored the senseless adulation of the public and press, and I am now just as indifferent to the censure bestowed without just cause.

I start to-morrow to run another race with Lee.

¹ Son of General Meade.

² For telegram mentioned, see Appendix C.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BERLIN, MD., July 16, 1863.

I wrote to you of the censure put on me by the President, through General Halleck, because I did not bag General Lee, and of the course I took on it. I don't know whether I informed you of Halleck's reply, that his telegram was not intended as a censure, but merely "to spur me on to an active pursuit," which I consider more offensive than the original message; for no man who does his duty, and all that he can do, as I maintain I have done, needs *spurring*. It is only the laggards and those who fail to do all they can do who require spurring. They have refused to relieve me, but insist on my continuing to try to do what I know in advance it is impossible to do. My army (men and animals) is exhausted; it wants rest and reorganization; it has been greatly reduced and weakened by recent operations, and no reinforcements of any practical value have been sent. Yet, in the face of all these facts, well known to them, I am urged, pushed and *spurred* to attempting to pursue and destroy an army nearly equal to my own, falling back upon its resources and reinforcements, and increasing its *morale* daily. This has been the history of all my predecessors, and I clearly saw that in time their fate would be mine. This was the reason I was disinclined to take the command, and it is for this reason I would gladly give it up.

I consider the New York riots very formidable and significant. I have always expected the crisis of this revolution to turn on the attempt to execute the conscription act, and at present things look very unfavorable.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BERLIN, MD., July 18, 1863.

I try to send you a few lines every chance I can get, but I find it very difficult to remember when I have written. I don't think I told you that on my way here, three days ago, I stopped and called on Mrs. Lee (Miss Carroll that was), who lives about six miles from this place. Mrs. Lee received me with great cordiality, insisted on my dining with her and daughter, which I did, and had a very nice time, it being quite refreshing to be once more in the presence of ladies, surrounded with all the refinements and comforts of home. I

wish, if you see any of the Jacksons and Bayards, you would say how gratified I was at the kind hospitality of Mrs. Lee and daughter, and what a nice girl I thought the latter was. The army is moving to-day over the same road I took last fall under McClellan. The Government insists on my pursuing and destroying Lee. The former I can do, but the latter will depend on him as much as on me, for if he keeps out of my way, I can't destroy. Neither can I do so if he is reinforced and becomes my superior in numbers, which is by no means improbable, as I see by the papers it is reported a large portion of Bragg's army has been sent to Virginia. The proper policy for the Government would have been to be contented with driving Lee out of Maryland, and not to have advanced till this army was largely reinforced and reorganized, and put on such a footing that its advance was sure to be successful. As, however, I am bound to obey explicit orders, the responsibility of the consequences must and should rest with those who give them. Another great trouble with me is the want of active and energetic subordinate officers, men upon whom I can depend and rely upon taking care of themselves and commands. The loss of Reynolds and Hancock is most serious; their places are not to be supplied. However, with God's help, I will continue to do the best I can.

UNION, VA., *July 21, 1863.*

Your indignation at the manner in which I was treated on Lee's escape is not only natural, but was and is fully shared by me. I did think at one time writing frankly to the President, informing him I never desired the command, and would be most glad at any time to be relieved, and that, as he had expressed dissatisfaction at my course, I thought it was his duty, independent of any personal consideration, to remove me. After reflection, however, I came to the conclusion to take no further action in the matter, and leave it entirely with them. I took the command from a sense of duty. I shall continue to exercise it, to the best of my humble capacity, in the same spirit. I have no ambition or ulterior views, and whatever be my fate, I shall try to preserve a clear conscience. I have received very handsome letters, both from Generals McClellan and Pope, which I enclose for your perusal and preservation.¹ I have answered them both in the same spirit as appears to have dictated them.

¹ For letter from McClellan to Meade, see Appendix D.

WARRENTON, VA., *July 26, 1863.*

I think my last letter to you was about the 21st or 22d, when I was embarrassed at not ascertaining anything definite in regard to Lee's movements. The next day, the 22d, I had positive information he was moving up the Valley of the Shenandoah. I immediately put my army in motion and pushed through Manassas Gap, where I met a part of his force. By the evening of the 24th I drove his force through Manassas Gap, and debouched with the head of my army into the open country beyond, in the vicinity of Front Royal, and having collected five corps together, expected to get a fight out of him on the 25th; but on advancing on that day he was again gone, having moved his whole army and trains (principally through Strasburg), day and night, on the 23d and 24th. Of course I was again disappointed, and I presume the President will be again dissatisfied. It is evident Lee is determined not to fight me till he gets me as far away from Washington as possible and in a position where all the advantages will be on his side. I hear from officers who have been in Washington that the President offered the command of this army to Grant, who declined it, but recommended Sherman. I consider I have done a great deal in compelling Lee to abandon the Valley of Virginia, where, but for my movements, he undoubtedly would have stayed, as he did last year, employing his army in gathering in the bountiful crops of that region, and sending them to his depots at Staunton and Gordonsville for use in the winter. As soon as I can get ready I shall move on again, and it remains to be seen whether he will make a stand on the Rappahannock or behind the Rapidan. Some people think they are preparing to abandon Virginia altogether, but I doubt this.

WARRENTON, VA., *July 31, 1863.*

I enclose you two letters recently received—one from the President to General Howard, who thought it proper to write to Mr. Lincoln, deprecating his dissatisfaction with me, and informing him I had the full confidence of the army. The other is from General Halleck, written voluntarily and without any particular call that I know, unless he has had repeated to him something that I have said. His letter is certainly very satisfactory, and places the matter, as I have replied to him, in a very different light from his telegram. Disappointment was a feeling natural to every one, and was fully shared in by myself. It could have been entertained without implying censure, but dissatisfaction implied a failure on my part, which I repu-

diated at the time and since. I have answered Halleck in the same spirit as his letter, thanking him for his kind feeling and good opinion, and explaining my position, and stating that personal considerations aside, I hope that whenever the President thinks I am wanting, or has another whom he deems better suited, I trust he will at once put me aside.

I see by the Richmond papers that Lee denies we had any fight at Falling Water, or that I captured any organized body of prisoners. He has been misinformed and it will be easy to prove the truth of my despatches.

"Letters"—Lincoln to Howard, Halleck to Meade, and Meade to Halleck—mentioned in last letter:

Lincoln to Howard:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, 21st July, 1863.

MY DEAR GENERAL HOWARD:

Your letter of the 10th is received. I was deeply mortified by the escape of Lee across the Potomac, because the substantial destruction of his army would have ended the war, and because I believed such destruction was perfectly easy—believed that General Meade and his noble army had expended all the skill and toil and blood up to the ripe harvest, and then let the crop go to waste. Perhaps my mortification was heightened because I had always believed—making my belief a hobby possibly—that the main rebel army going north of the Potomac could never return, if well attended to; and because I was so greatly flattered in this belief by the operations at Gettysburg. A few days having passed I am now profoundly grateful for what was done, without criticism for what was not done. General Meade has my confidence as a brave and skillful officer and a true man.

Yours very truly,
A. LINCOLN.

Halleck to Meade:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, WASHINGTON, July 28, 1863.

(Unofficial.)

MAJOR-GENERAL MEADE,

Army of the Potomac, Warrenton, Va.

General: I take this method of writing you a few words which I could not well communicate in any other way. Your fight at Gettys-

burg met with universal approbation of all military men here. You handled your troops in that battle as well, if not better, than any general has handled his army during the war. You brought all your forces into action at the right time and place, which no commander of the Army of the Potomac has done before. You may well be proud of that battle. The President's order of proclamation of July 4th showed how much he appreciated your success. And now a few words in regard to subsequent events. You should not have been surprised or vexed at the President's disappointment at the escape of Lee's army. He had examined into all the details of sending you reinforcements to satisfy himself that every man who could possibly be spared from other places had been sent to your army. He thought that Lee's defeat was so certain that he felt no little impatience at his unexpected escape. I have no doubt, General, that you felt the disappointment as keenly as any one else. Such things sometimes occur to us without any fault of our own. Take it all together, your short campaign has proved your superior generalship, and you merit, as you will receive, the confidence of the Government and the gratitude of the country. I need not assure you, General, that I have lost none of the confidence which I felt in you when I recommended you for the command.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
H. W. HALLECK.

Meade to Halleck:

HEADQUARTERS, A. P., July 31, 1863.

(Unofficial.)

MAJOR-GENERAL HALLECK, General-in-Chief.

My Dear General: I thank you most sincerely and heartily for your kind and generous letter of the 28th inst., received last evening. It would be wrong in me to deny that I feared there existed in the minds both of the President and yourself an idea that I had failed to do what another would and could have done in the withdrawal of Lee's army. The expression you have been pleased to use in a letter, to wit, a feeling of disappointment, is one that I cheerfully accept and readily admit was as keenly felt by myself as any one. But permit me, dear General, to call your attention to the distinction between disappointment and dissatisfaction. The one was a natural feeling in view of the momentous consequences that would have re-

sulted from a successful attack, but does not necessarily convey with it any censure. I could not view the use of the latter expression in any other light than as intending to convey an expression of opinion on the part of the President, that I had failed to do what I might and should have done. Now let me say in the frankness which characterizes your letter, that perhaps the President was right. If such was the case, it was my duty to give him an opportunity to replace me by one better fitted for the command of the army. It was, I assure you, with such feelings that I applied to be relieved. It was, not from any personal considerations, for I have tried in this whole war to forget all personal considerations, and I have always maintained they should not for an instant influence any one's action. Of course you will understand that I do not agree that the President was right—and I feel sure when the true state of the case comes to be known, however natural and great may be the feeling of disappointment, that no blame will be attached to any one. Had I attacked Lee the day I proposed to do so, and in the ignorance that then existed of his position, I have every reason to believe the attack would have been unsuccessful and would have resulted disastrously. This opinion is founded on the judgment of numerous distinguished officers, after inspecting Lee's vacated works and position. Among these officers I could name Generals Sedgwick, Wright, Slocum, Hays, Sykes, and others.

The idea that Lee had abandoned his lines early in the day that he withdrew, I have positive intelligence is not correct, and that not a man was withdrawn until after dark. I mention these facts to remove the impression which newspaper correspondents have given the public: that it was only necessary to advance to secure an easy victory. I had great responsibility thrown on me: on one side were the known and important fruits of victory, and on the other, the equally important and terrible consequences of defeat. I considered my position at Williamsport very different from that at Gettysburg. When I left Frederick it was with the firm determination to attack and fight Lee without regard to time or place as soon as I could come in contact with him. But, after defeating him and requiring him to abandon his schemes of invasion, I did not think myself justified in making a blind attack, simply to prevent his escape, and running all the risks attending such a venture. Now, as I said before, in this perhaps I erred in judgment, for I take this occasion to say to you, and through you to the President—that I have no pretensions to any

superior capacity for the post he has assigned me to—that all I can do is to exert my utmost efforts and do the best I can; but that the moment those who have a right to judge my actions think or feel satisfied either that I am wanting, or that another would do better, that moment I earnestly desire to be relieved, not on my own account, but on account of the country and the cause. You must excuse so much egotism, but your kind letter in a measure renders it necessary. I feel, General, very proud of your good opinion, and assure you I shall endeavor in the future to continue to merit it. Reciprocating the kind feeling you have expressed, I remain, General, most truly and respectfully yours,

GEORGE G. MEADE, Major-General.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

Monday, August 3, 1863.

I send a few lines by Sergeant,¹ who returns to-day. We see by the *Herald* that two of General Meade's sons are drafted, and the inference is that Sergeant's name has been drawn, and he ought therefore to be at home to attend to it. He has had a very nice time, of which he will give you the particulars. There was a handsome little fight that Buford's cavalry had day before yesterday, that he might have seen, but the weather was very warm and the scene of operations quite distant from my headquarters, so I did not say anything to him about it. He will give you all the news and tell you all my troubles.

The Government, for some reason best known to itself, has ordered me to cease the pursuit of Lee, though I strongly recommended an advance. This is confidential, though the newspapers for some days have been announcing that I would have to assume the defensive. Halleck in one despatch said it was because a considerable part of my army would be required to enforce the draft, but afterwards said he would only require sixteen hundred men, which I have sent. I don't know what this all means, but I suppose in time it will all come right.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, August 6, 1863.

I think I told you confidentially that Halleck had ordered me to halt and cease pursuing Lee, that I had given my judgment against the measure, but had been over-ruled. I do not know the reason.

¹ Son of General Meade.

The other day, as you saw in the papers, I pushed my cavalry forward, which alarmed them (the enemy), so that Lee immediately withdrew all his infantry behind the Rapidan. I am quite sure if I was to advance now, he would fall back to Richmond. What I fear from the delay is that he will recruit faster than I, for, from all I can gather, I fear our draft will prove a perfect failure, and that the few men it does produce will be worthless, and will desert the first opportunity. As the question never will be settled till their military power is destroyed, I think it unfortunate we do not take advantage of their present depression to push them as far as possible.

I think I told you that the President wrote me privately, to know if I would object to Hooker being assigned to a corps under me, and that I answered, no. To-day I have a private letter from ———, written undoubtedly at Halleck's instigation, saying it is reported Hooker is to be sent, provided I apply for him, and urging me strongly not to do so, on the ground that he will go to work to get up cliques against me, and to demoralize my army. I have written to ——— exactly what has occurred, and said that though my relations with Hooker would not justify me in objecting to his being ordered, yet I had no idea of applying for him, and I did not think either Hooker or his friends could or would expect me to do so. It would be very difficult for Hooker to be quiet under me or any one else, and I sincerely trust some independent command will be found for him, and that it will not be necessary to send him here.

Sunday, August 9, 1863.

General Crawford, commanding Pennsylvania Reserves, has notified me that the sword which they desire to present me with is ready, and asked me to allow an officer to go to Philadelphia to get it, and make the necessary arrangements, which I have done; so this affair of long standing will soon come off.

I note what you say ——— reports as the secession talk of New York; the same thing has been said in the *Times*, *Tribune* and *Herald*; but I was ahead of all these gentlemen, as in the despatch I sent General Halleck, urging to be permitted to advance, I told him that in my judgment, reasoning from the past, and in view of the power hitherto exercised over the people of the Confederacy, and the fertility of resources exhibited by them, I was of the opinion delay would be more advantageous to the enemy than to us, and that Lee would be reinforced more rapidly than I would be. Every day confirms me

in this view. Up to the present time they have taken from this army over twenty regiments, between eight and ten thousand men, and as yet have sent only *one hundred and twenty* miserable creatures, substitutes for drafted men, to a Pennsylvania regiment; a dozen of whom it is already ascertained were discharged from old regiments for physical disability; four of them had delirium tremens the day they joined, and several have already deserted. Such worthless material, as these men, are no addition to this army, but only a clog, and if the draft is not heartily responded to, the Government had better make up its mind to letting the South go. Don't misunderstand me; I am nothing of a copperhead. I am for a vigorous prosecution of the war; but the war cannot be prosecuted with any hope of success, not only without men, but a great many *willing men*; men who have their hearts in the business and who are determined to fight and to conquer, or die. I have had Warren made a major general, and George's friend, Colonel Ganard, a brigadier.

August 16, 1863.

I had a very quiet journey back, arriving at my headquarters about 10 P. M. I found that important despatches had been sent to me at 4 P. M., indicating a probable movement on the part of the enemy; so that it was very well that I returned. This information, brought by a scout, does not seem up to this moment to have been confirmed, and the stampede produced by it has pretty nearly passed away. I hope you had a pleasant journey to Philadelphia, and found them all well at home.

The manner in which I was received and treated in Washington by all with whom I came in contact was certainly most gratifying to me. I really believe I have the confidence of all parties and will continue to retain it, unless some great disaster should overtake me, which I ought not to anticipate. It will be best for both of us to look upon the future in the most favorable light, and trust to that kind Providence which hitherto has so signally blessed and protected us.

August 19, 1863.

Lee finds it as hard to recruit his army as I do mine. I do not hear of any reinforcements of any consequence joining him. At the same time it is very difficult to obtain any minute or reliable intelligence of his movements.

I saw to-day a note from Baldy Smith, who is at Hagerstown, commanding four hundred men and a "secesh" hospital. He says he is afraid to make any stir, for fear they should serve him as they have Franklin, who is at Baton Rouge, commanding a division under Banks. This is pretty hard for Franklin, and I feel sorry for him.

I had a visit yesterday from a Mrs. Harris, a lady belonging to the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, who has been connected with the army for a long time, and who, every one says, does a great deal of good. She talked a great deal about Philadelphia, where she belongs, and where she was going on a visit, and said every one would be inquiring about me, so that she had to come and see me.

August 21, 1863.

The draft, so far as the drawing of the names, appears to have passed off quietly in New York, but the tug will be when they attempt to secure the men. As, however, the Councils have appropriated money enough to buy off all the quota from the city, I should think the difficulty might be avoided.

I had a visit to-day from Mason Norvell, whom you may remember in Detroit. He was just from Detroit, and brought me many messages from my friends there, and said I could not realize how much they thought of me in Detroit.

I don't think you need fear my becoming a politician, and I believe such persons will let me alone so long as I am successful, or do not meet with any disaster; and if I am unlucky, it will not make much difference what my sentiments are; I shall have to go by the board.

August 23, 1863.

It must be very strange, traveling to Cape May in a railroad car, though I have no doubt, after you get there, everything, as you say, looks like old times. I wish dearly I could be with you, to enjoy the breeze and the luxurious bathing in the surf, to say nothing of the great fun of building forts in the sand with dear Willie, Sarah and Henrietta.¹ But such happiness is denied me, and all I can do is to hope you will enjoy yourselves and benefit by the trip.

To-day is Sunday. I attended service this afternoon, held by the chaplain of the regiment attached to my headquarters. It was a mongrel sort of service, being made up from our service and the

¹Children of General Meade.

Presbyterian. He made a short and pertinent discourse. We never have had the right kind of men for chaplains in the army. They mostly come apparently only for the pay, and either do nothing, or else make themselves obnoxious by interfering in matters they have no business with.

August 27, 1863.

To-morrow is the grand presentation day. I have not made the slightest preparation in the way of a speech, and have not the slightest idea what I shall say. Governor Curtin, I understand, is to make the presentation address; so, of course, I shall be overwhelmed with his eloquence and perhaps dumfounded. On reflection, I thought it absurd for me to make any labored effort; that it being entirely out of my line, I should most likely do worse than if I just trusted to luck and said what at the time seemed to me pertinent and suitable.

August 31, 1863.

I send you to-day some scraps from the newspapers. The first is an extract from the London correspondent of the *Presbyterian*, which Ben. Gerhard¹ sent to me, and which I consider very flattering; for if there is any reputation I aspire to, it is that of a gentleman. The next is the account of the grand presentation from Forney's *Chronicle*, which is the best and most accurate account I have seen.² The speech is accurately reported, with one exception, and that is where I am made to say, "I hoped the people of Pennsylvania would re-elect Governor Curtin." I said nothing of the kind, and made no allusions to elections. Just before I went on the stand, ——— came to me and said: "If you can say anything in favor of Curtin, it will help us greatly." I replied: "I don't know, Mr. ———, what you mean by helping you. You know I have nothing to do with politics; but it was my intention before you spoke to me to allude to Governor Curtin and his services in behalf of the volunteers from Pennsylvania." "Well," said he, "that is all we want." I did say all that I am reported to have said, except the allusion to his re-election, which was put in by ———. This was bad enough; but in to-day's paper ——— comes out in an editorial (which I send you), puffing Curtin and quoting my speech in italics.

¹ Benjamin Gerhard, brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

² The article mentioned is an editorial, and only extracts of the speech are given. The speech was reported in full in the *New York Tribune*, August 31, 1863. See Appendix E.

The more I examine my sword the more I am delighted with its beauty. It is really most chaste and artistic. It seems a pity, though, to waste so much money on an article that from its great value is actually rendered useless.

We are having a little excitement to-day, in an expedition that has been sent down the river, to attempt to destroy two gunboats which the enemy recently surprised and captured at the mouth of the Rappahannock. The expedition was ordered from Washington, and I hope it will prove successful.

The conscripts are coming in now pretty fast. To-day for the first time over a thousand arrived. They are generally pretty good men, and I trust the example made of the five deserters, who were shot on Saturday, will check the evil of desertion. This execution was witnessed by a very large number of soldiers, and I am told the only remark made was, "Why did they not begin this practice long ago?" Not a murmur against the justice or the propriety of the act was heard. Indeed, the men are the most anxious to see this great evil cured, as they know their own security will be advanced thereby.

September 3, 1863.

The expedition has been quite successful; the boats were found at Port Royal and were destroyed by our artillery fire from this side. The expedition sent to destroy them consisted of cavalry and artillery, but as they had to go a long distance, over forty miles from the main part of my army, I had to send infantry to support them, and to guard the lower crossing places to prevent the enemy coming over and cutting them off. This has stirred us up a little. We have also had a visit from Brigadier General Meigs, Quartermaster General, who has been inspecting the transportation of this army and who has been pleased to express himself very much gratified with all he has seen. The conscripts continue to come in very slowly, and I fear it will be some time before I am in a condition to move with any prospect of being able to accomplish anything.

I think I told you that one of William Parker's ¹ sons was on my staff. The other day he paid a visit to his regiment, and on his return must have been captured, as nothing has since been heard of him. I have written Cortlandt² about it, but I fear the news of his

¹ First cousin of General Meade.

² Cortlandt Parker, brother of William Parker.

disappearance got into the papers before my letter reached him, as I received a telegram to-day from his father enquiring about it.

I sent up my sword and fixings, but at the request of our express agent, it is to be exhibited for a short time at Galt's jewelry shop, in Washington.

September 5, 1863.

Have you seen a very bitter article in Wilkes's *Spirit of the Times*, of August 29th? ¹ He says the victory of Gettysburg was due entirely to the strength of the position and the heroic bravery of the common soldiers, and was entirely independent of any strategy or military ability displayed by any general from the senior down. He then charges me with imbecility and timidity, and says the Army of the Potomac never can do anything so long as so many incompetent men are at the head of it. The only consolation I have, is that censure from such a source will in the eyes of all respectable people be praise. There is no doubt the position at Gettysburg was very strong, and that the victory was in a great measure due to this fact; and it is also equally true that if the men had not fought as well as they did, I should have been beaten; but I have yet to learn the existence in history of a general whose genius was equal to winning victory when all the advantages were against him, and his men would not fight.

Wilkes is a Hooker man; but whether his article was inspired by any of the friends of this officer, I am not prepared to say, and can hardly believe such to be the case.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, September 8, 1863.

Yesterday I reviewed the Third Corps, commanded by General French. The day was pretty hot, and I had to ride six miles to the review and back the same distance. I received recently a very handsome bouquet from two ladies in Sheboygan, Wisconsin; I send you the note accompanying it. Likewise a curious letter written by a rebel refugee in Canada. I am in receipt of such curious documents all the time.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, September 11, 1863.

Everything remains quiet and *in statu quo*. Humphreys has gone to Philadelphia for a few days to see his wife, who is in the country, and will call to see you, and give you the latest news from

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix F.

camp. I wrote you in my last, of being the recipient of a bouquet from Wisconsin; but since then I have been honored with two very valuable presents. The first is a handsome scarf pin of gold and enamel. It is accompanied with a very flattering note stating it was made in England, and brought over by the donor to be presented in the name of himself and wife, as a tribute of admiration for my great services in saving the country. The note is signed W. H. Schenley, and I think the writer is a Captain Schenley, of the British navy, who many years since married Miss Croghan, of Pittsburgh. Captain Schenley says he intends visiting the army and making my acquaintance.

The second present is five hundred most delicious Havana cigars, sent to me by a Mr. Motley, of New York, whom I accidentally met at the sword presentation to General Sedgwick, and to whom I must have been particularly civil, or in some way made a great impression on him, to induce him to send me five hundred cigars. So you see there is some compensation for the misery we have to suffer.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 13, 1863.*

A few days ago some scouts I had sent across the river returned and reported that Lee's army was moving back to Richmond. They asserted positively that that portion near Fredericksburg had actually gone. I did not and do not much rely on their story, though I could not doubt but that a portion of his force had been sent away for some purpose either to re-inforce Beauregard at Charleston or Bragg in the South West.

It was necessary, however, that I should make some effort to ascertain what was going on, so to-day I sent Pleasanton, with all the cavalry, supported by Warren's Corps (Second), to see what they could find out. Pleasanton crossed the river early, and immediately was engaged with the enemy's cavalry, and has been fighting them all day. The result is that we have driven them from Culpeper Court House, and three miles beyond, have captured three guns and over fifty prisoners, and Warren is now in Culpeper, some nine miles in front of the Rappahannock. Still the great question as to whether Lee is withdrawing is unsettled, though Pleasanton sends word that all the information that he is able to pick up goes to support the rumor that he is falling back. Should it prove true, I suppose some movement on my part will be necessary; but what, I can't say, as with my limited force I don't see how I can advance much farther,

and there is no probability of their permitting me to go to the James River, as it uncovers Washington.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 16, 1863.*

The enclosed correspondence will explain itself. The day I received Mr. Young's letter, there was visiting at my camp the Hon. John Covode, of Pennsylvania, and Colonel Puleston, a friend of Governor Curtin. Both these gentlemen were present at the presentation and heard my remarks; both are ardent Republicans, yet they admitted they did not hear me make any reference to election day; on the contrary, admired the skill with which I praised Curtin without alluding to his political position. I do not know what Mr. Young will say or do, but it is his fault, or rather that of his reporter, and not mine, if he has been placed in a false position.

The enemy seem disposed to keep quiet the other side of the Rapidan, and to let me hold the country between that river and the Rappahannock, which I took from them on Sunday, including Culpeper Court House. I have now got as far as Pope was last year when he fought the battle of Cedar Mountain. I trust I will have better luck than he had. I am now waiting to know what they in Washington want done. Lee has certainly sent away a third of his army, but he has enough left to bother me in advancing, and though I have no doubt I can make him fall back, yet my force is insufficient to take advantage of his retiring, as I could not follow him to the fortifications of Richmond with the small army I have.

At the time Mr. Covode was here, he was accompanied by a Judge Carter, of Ohio, recently appointed Chief Judge of the new court created in the District of Columbia by the last Congress. These gentlemen spent the night with me, and I had a long talk on national affairs, and I saw what I was before pretty well convinced of, that there was not only little prospect of any adjustment of our civil war, but apparently no idea of how it was to be carried on. The draft is confessedly a failure. Instead of three hundred thousand men, it will not produce over twenty-five thousand, and they mostly worthless. There is no volunteering, and this time next year the whole of this army of veterans goes out of service, and no visible source of resupply. And yet no one seems to realize this state of affairs, but talks of going to war with England, France, and the rest of the world, as if our power was illimitable. Well, Heaven will doubtless in good time bring all things right.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 19, 1863.*

At present I am very busy. I made the advance I did under the belief that Lee had sent away a large portion of his army, and would perhaps, if threatened, retire to Richmond. I find, however, he evinces no disposition to do so, but is, on the contrary, posted in a very strong position behind the Rapidan, where he can hold me in check, and render it very difficult to pierce his line or turn his position. Under these circumstances I have referred the question to Washington.

To-day John Minor Botts, who lives in this vicinity, came to see me and told me Beckham had been at his house a few days ago (before we advanced), and spoke in the most enthusiastic terms of me; so that Beckham is not changed. A Mr. Pendleton also, who was in Congress and knew your father, called, and spoke of Mr. Joseph R. Ingersoll, who had been at his house. Both these gentlemen are Union men.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 24, 1863.*

The last time I wrote I told you of my having referred to Washington the question of a further advance. As I expected, no decisive answer was sent to me, but I was told to act in accordance with my own judgment. The next thing I was summoned to Washington and informed that the President considered my army too large for a merely defensive one, and proposed to take a portion of it away. I objected and reasoned against this, and left Washington with the belief that the President was satisfied. I had just arranged the programme for a movement, and was about issuing the orders, when orders came from Washington, taking troops away. Of this I do not complain. The President is the best judge of where the armies can be best employed, and if he chooses to place this army strictly on the defensive, I have no right to object or murmur. I was in Washington from 11 P. M. Tuesday till 1 P. M. Wednesday; saw no one but the President, Mr. Stanton and General Halleck; was treated very courteously by all. I told the President and General Halleck that if they thought I was too slow or prudent, to put some one else in my place. Halleck smiled very significantly, and said he had no doubt I would be rejoiced to be relieved, but there was no such good luck for me. I cannot very well tell you all that transpired; the intelligence, by no means favorable, had been received from Rosecrans, and it was evident, without any one knowing what exactly

might or could be done, that there still existed a feverish anxiety that I should try and do something. Now that I have been weakened, I presume the country will not be so *exigeante*.

CULPEPER COURT HOUSE, VA., *September 27, 1863.*

We are having lovely weather at present; our camps are beautifully situated at the foot of the Blue Ridge, with the mountains in view, with pure air and plenty of good water; the best country in Virginia we have yet been in.

I had a visit yesterday from the Rev. Mr. Coles, Episcopal minister at the village, who told me he had seen Mr. Wilmer some few weeks since, and he had talked a great deal of me, and told him I had been his parishioner. He says Mr. Wilmer is not connected with the army, and has no church, but occupies himself in works of charity, and when he saw him he was on his way to visit the sick and wounded of the Confederate army, after its return from Pennsylvania.

I have tried, but unsuccessfully, to get some news of the Wises.¹ Mr. Wise's command undoubtedly went with Longstreet to Tennessee, but whether he went I am not able to ascertain.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 30, 1863.*

I am sorry to see you so anxious about me, because it is impossible to keep you constantly advised of what is going on, and your imagination undoubtedly makes matters worse. You must try and be resigned, and not anticipate evil, but wait for its actual arrival. My position is of course liable to misconstruction so long as the public are ignorant of the truth, but the time will come when they will be enlightened, and then I shall be all right. Of course, if people believe that Lee has no army, and that I have an immense one, it is hard to expect them not to inquire why I do not do something; but when they come to know that just as I was about trying to do something, my army was suddenly reduced to a figure a little greater only than Lee's, and that he occupies a very strong position, where the natural advantages in his favor more than equalize the difference in our forces, they will understand why I cannot do anything. I have remained here to offer Lee battle if he chooses to come out of his stronghold, and to prevent by my threatening attitude his sending any more troops to Bragg. Whether I will get any credit for this is perhaps

¹ General Henry A. Wise and son, brother-in-law and nephew of Mrs. Meade.

questionable. The whole matter, however, reverts to what I have always told you, that I intend to act up to the French motto, "*Faites bien, laissez dire.*"

I don't think I wrote to you that I had a very pleasant visit from a General Cortez, of the Mexican army, who came here with letters from the Secretaries of State and War. He spent a day with me, and I took him around the camps and showed him different portions of the army, and he went away much gratified. I also had a visit from Sir Henry Holland, physician to the Queen of England. He was a very agreeable, intelligent gentleman, over seventy years of age, who had crossed the Atlantic fourteen times. He seemed greatly interested with everything we showed him.

To-day Gouverneur Paulding and a Dr. Young, of Cold Spring, New York, have been here to present General Warren with a sword. Paulding I have known from a boy, and Dr. Young married a daughter of old Parson Hawley, of Washington. They also have been delighted with their visit.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CULPEPER C. H., October 4, 1863.

I have been very busy writing my report of the battle of Gettysburg, which has been delayed till this time by the want of the reports of my subordinate commanders, many of whom were absent, wounded. I have at last got through with it, and feel greatly relieved, although I have made it as short and simple as possible.¹

I can hardly believe my letters are opened, as you suspect. I can see no object to be gained, and the crime is so heinous I cannot believe any one would be guilty of it.

I have heard nothing definite of young Parker since he disappeared. I wrote to Sol. Meredith (Brigadier General), who is at present our commissioner at Fortress Monroe for the exchange of prisoners, and asked him to enquire through the Confederate Commissioner whether Lieutenant Parker had reached Richmond. He answered he would do so, and send any intelligence to his father at Boston. I presume, however, he would let me know also if he heard anything.

The only member of my staff, besides Humphreys, who messes with me, is Colonel Lyman. As he is an unpaid volunteer, and came to me on personal considerations, I took him into my mess.

¹ Official Records, serial No. 43, p. 114.

*To John Sergeant Meade:*¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, October 7, 1863.

I have read the article in *Blackwood*, which is tolerably fair for a "secesh" Englishman. The general officer referred to as being cheered was your humble servant, and I was at that time riding down the line to the left, for the purpose of ordering an attack; but it was so late and the distance to the enemy's line so great, that by the time the troops were in motion the day was at an end.

Lee's report has just been published. Considering all things, it is pretty fair, in some places a little too much of what the lawyers call the *suppressio veri*. Still, I am willing to leave to history the fact, which he plainly admits, that after the battle of Gettysburg he had to retreat continuously till he reached the south bank of the Rappahannock, from whence he had started to destroy my army and accomplish other valuable results.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, October 12, 1863.

On Saturday I found Lee was turning my right flank and assuming an offensive position. As to have remained where I was would have endangered my communications, I yesterday fell back to the Rappahannock. As I do not hear to-day anything of his movement on my right being continued, I have sent a force back towards Culpeper, to see whether he will give me battle at any point between the two rivers. If he will, I shall fight him at all hazards. At the present moment there is firing heard, but I have not received any report.

I have most earnestly, by special telegram, recommended Gibbon for promotion. Indeed, himself and Buford are the only two that I have urged in this special manner on the attention of the department. The difficulty is that there are no vacancies in the grade of major general, and several appointments have been made in excess of the number authorized by law.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CENTREVILLE, October 17, 1863.

Lee made a desperate effort to get in my rear, but I succeeded in out-manceuvring him, and got into position at this place, Centre-

¹Son of General Meade.

ville, with my back to Washington, and ready for his attack if he had chosen to make it.¹ This is the third day we have been here and he has not come forward; I am trying to find out where he now is. If he is near me I shall attack him, but I fear that, failing in his manoeuvre, he is either going back, or going up into the Valley of the Shenandoah, where I shall have to follow him.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
WARRENTON, *October 21, 1863.*

Lee has retired across the Rappahannock, after completely destroying the railroad on which I depend for my supplies. His object is to prevent my advance, and in the meantime send more troops to Bragg. This was a deep game, and I am free to admit that in the playing of it he has got the advantage of me.

WARRENTON, *October 23, 1863.*

Yesterday I received an order to repair to Washington, to see the President. I arrived in Washington at 2 P. M., and expected to leave at 6 P. M., but was detained so late that I remained there all night, and left this morning, early. The President was, as he always is, very considerate and kind. He found no fault with my operations, although it was very evident he was disappointed that I had not got a battle out of Lee. He coincided with me that there was not much to be gained by any farther advance; but General Halleck was very urgent that something should be done, but what that something was he did not define. As the Secretary of War was absent in Tennessee, final action was postponed till his return.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 30, 1863.*

You seem to be very much puzzled about my retreat, as you misname it. It was not a retreat, but a withdrawal of the army—manœuvring to get into a proper position to offer battle, and made to prevent Lee from compelling me to fight at a disadvantage. Had I been able to ascertain his movements, I would have given him battle the day Warren was attacked; but I was misled by information which induced me to believe he was farther ahead. As it afterwards turned out, I was ahead of him; which was the object I was trying to attain before fighting. It was greatly to my interest to fight, and I was most anxious to do so, but I would not do so with

¹ Bristoe, Va., campaign.

all the advantages on his side, and the certainty that if the battle went against me I could not extricate the army from its perilous position. I don't suppose I shall ever get credit for my motives, except with the army. The soldiers realize the necessity of not letting the enemy have the game in their hands entirely; hence they cheerfully submitted to all the hardships, such as night and forced marches, that I was compelled to impose on them.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 3, 1863.*

There is no doubt my failure to engage Lee in battle during his recent advance created great disappointment, in which feeling I fully shared. I have seen and heard of no indications of absolute dissatisfaction, though this may have existed without its being manifested. The General in Chief did telegraph me I had better fight instead of running away, but as he did not explain how I could fight to advantage, I paid no attention to the very rough manner in which he expressed his views, except to inform him that, if my judgment was not approved, I ought to be and deserved to be relieved; to which I received no reply beyond a disclaiming of any intention to give offence. Now I have clearly indicated what I thought feasible and practicable and my plan is *disapproved*. I think under these circumstances justice to me and the true interests of the country justify their selecting some one else to command.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 9, 1863.*

When I last wrote to you I thought we were on the eve of a great battle, and I was also under the impression that the work I had before me was likely to prove a very severe task. The enemy occupied very strong positions on the Rappahannock, which at one place I knew were strongly entrenched, and I believed they were so at other points. Thanks, however, to their being entirely deceived as to my capacity to move, and to the gallantry of my men, we were enabled to carry their strong works and to force the passage of the river (considered one of the most critical operations in war), with a comparatively small loss, and with great *eclat*, as we captured four guns, eight battle flags and nearly two thousand prisoners. The operation being successful, the army is in fine spirits, and of course I am more popular than ever, having been greeted yesterday as I rode through the ranks with great cheering; and my having forced the passage of the Rappahannock and compelled Lee to retire to the Rapidan, will I trust

convince the intelligent public that my retreat to Centreville was not to avoid battle, and that Lee, who was not outflanked, or had his communications threatened, but was attacked in front, and yet withdrew, is really the one who has avoided battle. I certainly expected he would fight, and can only now account for his not doing so on the ground that he was deceived as to my strength and construed my sudden and bold advance into an evidence that I had been strongly reinforced and greatly outnumbered him. I must say I was greatly disappointed when I found Lee refused my offer of battle, because I was most desirous of effecting something decisive, and I know his refusal was only a postponement of a question that had to be met and decided.

I have received a telegram from the President, expressing his satisfaction with my operations.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 25, 1863.*

Yesterday it stormed, which required a postponement of the contemplated movement. I was going to advance to-morrow, and may yet do so, although at present the sky is overcast and threatening. It is of the utmost importance to the success of any movement to have good weather, particularly at this season of the year, when the roads, after a day's rain, become impassable. I think if I advance we shall have a great and decisive battle, with what result, He who reigns above alone can tell in advance. My army is in excellent condition and in high spirits, and confident of success, if they can get anything of a fair chance, and so far as mortals can anticipate such doubtful matters as battles, I have a right to be hopeful. Let us trust it may please God to crown our efforts with victory, and to extend to me, as He has hitherto so signally done, His mercy and protection.

George¹ is quite well; he has been occupied, taking care of the English Guardsmen, who are so pleased with their visit they are remaining to see the fight.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 2, 1863.*

I expect your wishes will now soon be gratified, and that I shall be relieved from the Army of the Potomac. The facts are briefly these: On the 26th ultimo I crossed the Rapidan, intending to turn the right flank of General Lee and attack him, or compel him to

¹ Son of General Meade.

attack me out of his formidable river entrenchments. I had previously been advised, by deserters and others, that he had commenced a line of works running perpendicular to the river, but only extending a few miles, but which he designed covering his flank, and permitting him to leave the lower fords unguarded. I accordingly made my plans to cross in three columns, to unite at a common point below his entrenchments, and then to advance rapidly and attack him before he could prepare any defenses. The plan was a good one, but owing to the failure of others to whom its execution was necessarily intrusted, it failed. In the first place, one corps was three hours behind time in arriving at the river, and slow of movement afterwards; which caused a delay of one day, enabled the enemy to advance and check my columns before they united, and finally to concentrate his army in a very formidable position, behind entrenchments almost as strong as those I was making a long detour to avoid. Again, after I had come up with the enemy, one corps commander¹ reported he had examined a position where there was not the slightest doubt he could carry the enemy's works, and on his positive and unhesitating judgment, he was given twenty-eight thousand men, and directed to attack the next morning at eight o'clock. At the same time another attack was to be made by fifteen thousand men, at a point where the enemy evidently was not fully prepared. On the eventful morning, just as the attack was about being made, I received a despatch from the officer commanding the twenty-eight thousand men, saying he had changed his opinion, and that the attack on his front was *so hopeless*, that he had assumed the responsibility of suspending it till further orders were received. This astounding intelligence reached me just ten minutes before the hour of attacking, and barely in time to suspend the other attack, which was a secondary one, and which, even if successful, could not be supported with so large a portion of my force away for the main attack. This lost me another day, during which the enemy so strengthened the point threatened by the secondary attack as to render it nearly as strong as the rest of his line, and to have almost destroyed the before probable chances of success. Finding no possibility of attacking with hope of success, and power to follow up success, and that the only weak point visible had been strengthened during the delay caused by the change of opinion of a corps commander, I determined not to attempt an assault. I could not move any further around the

¹ General G. K. Warren.

enemy's flank, for want of roads, and from the danger at this season of the year of a storm, which would render locomotion, off the prepared roads, a matter of impossibility. After reviewing all the circumstances, notwithstanding my most earnest desire to give battle, and in the full consciousness of the fact that my failure to do so was certain personal ruin, I, having come to the conclusion that an attack could not be successful, determined to, and did, withdraw the army. I am fully aware it will be said I did wrong in deciding this question by reasoning, and that I ought to have tried, and then a failure would have been evidence of my good judgment; but I trust I have too much reputation as a general to be obliged to encounter certain defeat, in order to prove that victory was not possible. Political considerations will, however, enter largely into the decision, and the failure of the Army of the Potomac to do anything, at this moment, will be considered of vital consequence, and if I can be held responsible for this failure, I will be removed to prove that I am. I therefore consider my fate as settled; but as I have told you before, I would rather be ignominiously dismissed, and suffer anything, than knowingly and wilfully have thousands of brave men slaughtered for nothing. It was my deliberate judgment that I ought not to attack; I acted on that judgment, and I am willing to stand or fall by it at all hazards. I shall write to the President, giving him a clear statement of the case, and endeavoring to free his action as much as possible, by assuming myself all the responsibility. I feel of course greatly disappointed; a little more good fortune, and I should have met with brilliant success. As it is, my conscience is clear. I did the best I could. If I had thought there was any reasonable degree of probability of success, I would have attacked. I did not think so; on the contrary, believed it would result in a useless and criminal slaughter of brave men, and might result in serious disaster to the army. I determined not to attack, no other movements were practicable, and I withdrew. There will be a great howl all over the country. Letter writers and politicians will denounce me. It will be proved as clear as the light of day, that an attack was perfectly practicable, and that everyone, except myself, in the army, particularly the soldiers, was dying for it, and that I had some mysterious object in view, either in connection with politics, or stock-jobbing, or something else about as foreign to my thoughts, and finally the Administration will be obliged to yield to popular clamor and discard me. For all this I am prepared, fortified as I said before by a

clear conscience, and the conviction that I have acted from a high sense of duty, to myself as a soldier, to my men as their general, and to my country and its cause, as the agent having its vital interests solemnly entrusted to me, which I have no right wantonly to play with and to jeopardize, either for my own personal benefit, or to satisfy the demands of popular clamor, or interested politicians.¹

George² was sent with one of the messages to suspend the attack; his horse fell with him, he was a little bruised and cut about the eye, but nothing serious.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 3, 1863.*

Two days have now elapsed since I officially announced the return of the army, and yet not a word or line has been vouchsafed me from Washington. I am somewhat at a loss to know what the silence of the authorities means. My despatch simply stated the fact that, finding Lee too strongly posted and entrenched to justify my attacking him, and not being able to make any further tactical movement on his flank, I had felt it my duty to withdraw the army, and feared the lateness of the season would prevent any other offensive operations. I made no explanations of the causes of the failure of my plans, nor have any been asked. I did think at one time of writing to the President, who has always treated me with great kindness, but, upon reflection, I deemed it best to communicate only officially, and in a day or two I shall make an official report, which will set the whole matter right. Of one thing I am sure, that my course has met the full approbation of the army and increased the confidence they before had in me.

I yesterday received a letter from Charlotte Ingraham.³ She tells me all her brothers, and one brother-in-law, lie on the battlefield, thus confirming the report I had heard that Frank had been killed at Gettysburg. She says her parents are at Port Gibson, completely ruined, and that they have all to begin anew the world. Is not this terrible?

I enclose you a curious correspondence just received to file among the historical papers of the war. Poor Mr. Holstein has committed a very bold act, and I fear it will not be long before he will have to repent. I have written him a letter of thanks and send him my photograph, my hair being too gray to display in Bridgeport and

¹ Mine Run campaign.

² Niece of General Meade.

³ Son of General Meade.

my coats requiring all the buttons they have on them. Is not this a funny world?

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 7, 1863.

I am yet on the anxious bench; not one word has been vouchsafed me from Washington. To-day I have sent in my official report, in which I have told the plain truth, acknowledged the movement was a failure, but claimed the causes were not in my plans, but in the want of support and co-operation on the part of subordinates.¹ I don't know whether my report will be published, but if it is, it will make a sensation, and undoubtedly result in some official investigation. I have received a very kind letter from Cortlandt Parker (written before he had received yours), in which he sympathizes with me in the failure, but says he is satisfied I have done right, and that I have not lost the confidence of intelligent people, and he hopes I will not resign, but hold on till the last. I have also received a very kind and complimentary letter from Gibbon, saying he had as much confidence as ever in my ability to command, and that military men would sustain me. I telegraphed General Halleck that I desired to visit Washington, but his reply was couched in such terms that, though it gave me permission to go, clearly intimated that my presence was not desired, so far as he was concerned. I have in consequence not gone, and now shall not go unless they send for me.

I see the *Herald* is constantly harping on the assertion that Gettysburg was fought by the corps commanders and the common soldiers, and that no generalship was displayed. I suppose after awhile it will be discovered I was not at Gettysburg at all.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 11, 1863.

I have not heard a word from Washington, but from what I see in the papers, and what I hear from officers returning from Washington, I take it my supersedure is decided upon, and the only question is who is to succeed me. I understand the President and Secretary Chase are very anxious to bring Hooker back; but Halleck and Stanton will undoubtedly oppose this. A compromise may perhaps be made by bringing Thomas² here, and giving Hooker Thomas's army.

¹ Official Records, serial No. 48, p. 8.

² Major-General George H. Thomas, commanding the Army of the Cumberland.

I have very kind letters from Gibbon and Hancock, both hoping I will not be relieved, and each saying they had not lost a particle of confidence in me. Many officers in the army have expressed the same feeling, and I really believe the voice of the army will sustain me. This, though, goes for nothing in Washington. I will not go to Washington to be snubbed by these people; they may relieve me, but I will preserve my dignity.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 12, 1863.*

The mail has just come in and brings to-day's *Washington Chronicle*, which announces I am *not* to be relieved. As this paper is edited by Forney, who is supposed to have confidential relations with the Administration, I presume this announcement may be considered semi-official.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 16, 1863.*

I received yesterday your letter of the 13th inst., and would have answered it at once, but about 2 P. M. we had a sudden invasion of Muscovites, some twenty-four officers of the fleet visiting the army, and I had to give them my attention till after 10 P. M., when they returned to Alexandria. I had the Sixth Corps paraded and some artillery to show them. We had great fun with them in mounting them on horseback, which they all insisted on attempting; but we had not proceeded far before one was thrown and some half a dozen ran away with. After the review we gave them some dinner, with plenty of brandy and whisky, and, making them jolly, sent them back highly delighted with their visit and reception. They appeared intelligent and gentlemanly, almost all speaking English quite well. The admiral did not honor us, Captain Bourtakoff being the senior officer with the party.

I presume you have seen how highly honored I have been in having my name associated with General Hooker by Mr. Wilson, in the Senate, in a vote of thanks for the Gettysburg campaign. Why they confined the including of my predecessors to Hooker I am at a loss to imagine. He certainly had no more to do with my operations and success at Gettysburg than either Burnside or McClellan; but I presume Mr. Wilson, who is a great friend and admirer of Hooker, was a little doubtful of a distinct resolution on his behalf getting through.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 18, 1863.*

To-day Captain Chauncey handed me your letter of the 13th inst.

As to politics and politicians, as I never have had anything to do with them, and have personal friends in all parties, I don't see why I am to fear them now. I think I can keep them in their proper places. Already the *Tribune* has charged that the gentleman in New Jersey, my correspondent, is George B. McClellan, and asks why this is not openly avowed. I have no political aspirations. I have the ambition to prove myself a good soldier, and intend to try to afford evidences of this to the last. Major Jim Biddle has gone on leave; so you will hear all the latest news from the camp.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 20, 1863.*

As to the Christmas box you ask about, it is hardly necessary to send it, as the Frenchman who messes me provides me liberally with everything, and these boxes are very expensive. I expect you will have your hands full with the children at Christmas, and I think you had better throw into this fund the amount you would expend on me for a box and mufti.

I have had several visitors recently. One was the Chevalier Danesi, a young Sardinian officer, who has come to this country with a view of serving in our army. The other was an English gentleman, from Liverpool, an original Union man, who desired to see our army in the field. Danesi brought me a letter from McClellan, and the Englishman one from Mr. Seward, Secretary of State. They both spent a day very pleasantly, and I endeavored to be civil to them.

I suppose you have seen Greeley's apology about the New Jersey letter. After he found it was written to a loyal Republican, he changed his tune about the character of its contents. I wonder what these people want if they are not satisfied with my services and my practical devotion to their cause?

You ask me about Grant. It is difficult for me to reply. I knew him as a young man in the Mexican war, at which time he was considered a clever young officer, but nothing extraordinary. He was compelled to resign some years before the present war, owing to his irregular habits. I think his great characteristic is indomitable energy and great tenacity of purpose. He certainly has been very successful, and that is nowadays the measure of reputation. The

enemy, however, have never had in any of their Western armies either the generals or the troops they have had in Virginia, nor has the country been so favorable for them there as here. Grant has undoubtedly shown very superior abilities, and is I think justly entitled to all the honors they propose to bestow upon him.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 24, 1863.

George¹ will tell you of my French visitors, and that they took up so much of my time that I could not write. To-day I have sent them out under the escort of a staff officer, and have embraced the chance to send you a few lines. They are very clever gentlemen—indeed, the most gentlemanly Frenchmen I have ever met. I understand they belong to the *haute noblesse*. One is the Prince d'Aremberg and the other the Comte de Choiseul. They have with them a young Englishman named Blount, who is an *habitué* of the Paris *salons*, and who came over with them. The two Frenchmen are officers of cavalry in the army, one on leave from his regiment in Paris, and the other going to Mexico. They brought me a very strong note from Mr. Mercier, the French Minister at Washington, who only refrained from accompanying them because he is about to return next week to Europe. They have in their company a Mr. Hutton, from New York, who used to be on Burnside's staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 28, 1863.

I was very sorry I could not be at home to spend Christmas with you and the children, but was glad to let George¹ go. I spent a very quiet day in camp, attending to the business of re-enlisting the veteran volunteers, to which I had to give much personal attention, as I had let Williams, Humphreys, and many others, go to Washington to spend the day.

Yesterday General Hancock arrived. He has been with me all the time since his arrival, and we have had a long talk. He says it was undoubtedly intended at first to relieve me, and it was, as I surmised, intimated to him that he would be placed in command. Such was his impression till the day before he came down, when, on reporting to Halleck, he was told the design was abandoned, and that he could go down to his old corps. Hancock further says that Halleck declares he saved me; that they were going to relieve me at once on the receipt of the intelligence that I had returned; but that

¹ Son of General Meade.

he, Halleck, said, "No, an officer who gained the battle of Gettysburg is entitled to more consideration. Let us wait and hear what General Meade has to say, and if his report is not satisfactory, then we can act advisedly." This was agreed to, and the unanimous opinion of all returning officers, together with my report, changed the whole aspect of the case. I must say I am gratified some little consideration was extended towards me and that justice was finally awarded.

I understand there is a bitter article in Wilkes's *Spirit of the Times*, asserting that Hooker planned the campaign of Gettysburg, and that Butterfield wrote all the orders for the movements, in accordance with Hooker's plans.¹ I furthermore hear that General Sickles asserts that Hancock selected the position, and that he (Sickles), with his corps, did all the fighting at Gettysburg. So, I presume, before long it will be clearly proved that my presence on the field was rather an injury than otherwise.

The President has written me that he desires to see me upon the subject of executing deserters; so, as soon as I can get time, I shall have to go up to Washington.

*To John Sergeant Meade:*²

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *January 6, 1864.*

We have now at headquarters Collis's "Zu-Zu" Regiment, commanded by one of the Bowens, Collis being in command of a brigade in the Third Corps. They have a fine band, one of the best in the army.

A good many of the old volunteers have re-enlisted—more than I expected—and if Congress allows the bounty hitherto paid, many more will re-enlist.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

WILLARD'S HOTEL, Sunday, *February 14, 1864—7 P. M.*

I felt very badly at leaving you, but I tried to reconcile myself to what was inevitable and could not be helped. We had a very pleasant journey to this place. Mr. Cram and Colonel Bache joined us at the depot, and at Wilmington I found General Hartsuff and

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix G.

² Son of General Meade.

Colonel Sackett on the train and took them into the car. Mr. Felton, the president of the company, was at the cars and was very civil. When we crossed the Susquehanna an elegant cold collation with champagne was set out, of which we all freely partook. On arriving here we took tea, and soon afterwards, about nine o'clock, I went to bed. The next day I spent all the day at the Department and White House. The Secretary was, as he always is, very civil and ready to accede to all my suggestions. He gratified me very much by saying that there was no officer in command who had to so great a degree the implicit confidence of all parties as myself; but he said there were several officers in my army that did not have the confidence of the country, and that I was injuring myself by retaining them. I told him I did not know who they were, but that if he was aware of this fact, I thought it was his duty to retire them, and I should not object; and I suppose the result will be a pretty general sweeping out. While with the Secretary, Mr. Usher, Secretary of the Interior, came in and invited me to his house at seven o'clock. Supposing it to be an evening party, where I could show myself and slip out, I accepted; but on going there I found it to be a regular dinner party. Senators Collamore, Wilson, Wilkeson and Powell, together with Judges Holt and Law, and the ladies of the family, constituted the party. All received and treated me with great distinction and civility, and about 10 P. M. I got home, and, after a talk with Cram, went to bed, a little tired. I had intended to go down to the army this morning, but received last night a note from the Secretary, saying he wanted to see me to-day; so I had to spend some four or five hours at the Department, and the rest of the day have remained quietly in the house with Cram.

Mr. Harding with Mrs. Harding are here, also Cortlandt Parker. I have not seen our friends the Harrises, except the Senator.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 16, 1864.*

I reached camp yesterday about 4 P. M., but was so much engaged talking to those who came to see me that I had no time to write to you. I had a grand sleep last night in my old buffalo robe, and feel a great deal better to-day, the cold in my head being much better. Indeed, it may be imagination, but I think getting back to camp has been decidedly beneficial, notwithstanding I arrived in a snow storm and that it has been very cold to-day. My friend Lyman had a big fire in my tent all day before I came. By-the-by, Lyman

tells me his father-in-law, Mr. Russell, studied law in your father's office, and remembers you very well. If you see Colonel Bache, you can tell him Lyman is the son of his old friend, as Lyman tells me his father was Mayor of Boston and married a Miss Henderson, of New York.

I have been overwhelmed with business and papers to-day. Among others, I have some fifteen applications for autographs and *cartes-de-visite*.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 18, 1864.*

I have got quite well again; the slight cold I had in Washington has disappeared, and I have lost the sensation of weakness which I retained till I left Washington. I find there has been a good deal of pneumonia in camp. Major Barstow, on my staff, was quite sick with it. He is now well. He is, by-the-by, a son of your father's old friend in Salem and remembers visiting your house in Philadelphia. To-day a very nice fellow, the agent of the Associated Press, died of pneumonia. Everything was done for him in the way of medical attendance and nursing, but without avail. The weather has been intensely cold, the thermometer last night being as low as zero. To-day it is more moderate and cloudy, looking like snow.

I have to go up to Washington to-morrow, which I dislike very much, besides its being so expensive. Affairs here are very quiet. I have not seen many of the officers except those immediately around me. I have to go to Washington to arrange the details of the proposed reorganization, which will make a great noise when they are made public.

IN CAMP, *February 21, 1864.*

I returned from Washington to-day, very much fatigued and worn out with two days passed in that place. I reached there Friday about 2 P. M., and immediately went to the Department, where I stayed till 6 P. M., returned to the hotel, dined, and spent the evening with Mr. Odell, member of Congress, and Judge Harris. The next day, Saturday, I was with General Halleck till 3 P. M., when I went out to Georgetown and saw Margaret.¹ I ought to have mentioned that before going to see Margaret, I stopped at the President's, where Mrs. Lincoln was holding a levee, and spent a half-hour. I also ought to have stated that the evening before, after leaving Judge

¹ Sister of General Meade.

Harris, I was persuaded by Mr. Harding and Cortlandt Parker to go to Speaker Colfax's reception, where I was a great lion, Mr. Colfax himself turning usher and bringing every man and woman in the room to introduce to me. All this going about, sitting up late at night and standing so much, had its effect on me, wearying and fatiguing me so that I was very glad to get back to-day.

The army is overrun with women. There is to be a grand ball to-morrow at the headquarters of the Second Corps, and I believe half of Washington is coming down to attend. I expected the Secretary of the Interior and his lady to come down with me to-day, but he did not come to the cars. As the ball is nearly five miles from my headquarters, I don't think I shall have the courage to go. I don't mind the going, but it is the coming back which is so unpleasant.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 24, 1864.*

Since writing last we have had quite a gay time. The ball of the Second Corps came off on the 22d, and was quite a success. The room constructed for the purpose was beautifully decorated. There were present about three hundred ladies, many coming from Washington for the occasion, an elegant supper furnished by Gautier, indeed everything in fine style. I rode over in an ambulance a distance of five miles, and got back to my bed by four o'clock in the morning. The next day I reviewed the Second Corps for the benefit of our lady guests. I mounted my horse at 11 o'clock, rode over to the review and got back at six, having been seven hours in the saddle, and I believe I was less fatigued than any of my staff, so you can judge I have quite recovered my strength. George¹ went to the ball and enjoyed himself hugely.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 27, 1864.*

I am glad George¹ wrote you an account of the ball. I should have been delighted, if I had owned the carpet in the Arabian Nights to have transported sister and yourself to the army for that night, but the journey here and back, the expense and fatigue, besides exposure, were all drawbacks, greater than the compensation to be found in the pleasure of your presence.

I have been a good deal occupied with an attempt I am about making, to send a force of cavalry into Richmond to liberate our prisoners. The undertaking is a desperate one, but the anxiety and dis-

¹ Son of General Meade.

trass of the public and of the authorities at Washington is so great that it seems to demand running great risks for the chances of success.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 29, 1864.*

Yesterday Mr. Dorr, from Christ Church, preached for us, and afterwards dined and spent the evening with me. During the evening one of the escaped prisoners from Libby prison, who had made his way from Richmond right through the main body of Lee's army and into our lines, came to see me, and Mr. Dorr seemed very much interested in the narrative of his adventures. He returned home this morning, delighted with his visit to the army and all he had seen. He has a son who is a captain in Chapman Biddle's regiment, the One Hundred and Twenty-first Pennsylvania Volunteers.

My cavalry expedition for Richmond got off last night, and at 2 A. M., the last I heard from them, they were getting on famously, not having met any one or being, as far as they could tell, discovered by the enemy. I trust they will be successful; it will be the greatest feat of the war, if they do succeed, and will immortalize them all. Young Dahlgren,¹ with his one leg, went along with them. The weather from having been most favorable, now that the expedition has gone, begins to look suspicious, and to-night we have a little rain.

I see Congress has passed the Lieutenant General bill. This will make Grant Commander-in-Chief; what will become of Halleck I can't tell, and possibly when Grant is responsible for all military operations, he may want some one else whom he knows better in command of this army.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 2, 1864.*

We have all been in a state of excitement about our recent cavalry raids. On the 28th, I moved the Sixth Corps and part of the Third to Madison Court House, threatening the enemy's left flank. At the same time Custer, with fifteen hundred cavalry and two pieces of artillery, was sent to Charlottesville to try and cut the Gordonsville and Lynchburg Railroad near that place, where there is an important bridge over the Ravenna River. Custer got within two miles of the bridge, but found it too strongly guarded. He, however, skirmished with the enemy, destroyed and captured a great deal of property, took fifty prisoners, and on his return cut his way through a large cavalry force, commanded by Jeb. Stuart, that had been sent

¹ Ulric Dahlgren, killed March 4, 1864.

to cut him off, thus being quite successful. In the meantime, while the enemy's attention was fully occupied with Custer, and they were under the impression I was moving in that direction, Kilpatrick, with four thousand cavalry and six guns, at night crossed the Rapidan on our left and pushed straight for Richmond. He fortunately captured the picket on the Rapidan, thus preventing early intelligence of his movement being communicated. He left Sunday night, and the last we have heard of him was Monday afternoon, when he was within thirty miles of Richmond. Of course you can imagine our anxiety to know his fate. If he finds Richmond no better guarded than our information says it is, he will have a great chance of getting in and liberating all the prisoners, which is the great object of the movement. God grant he may, for their sakes and his.

I suppose you have seen by the papers that I have been confirmed as a brigadier general in the regular army.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 6, 1864.*

I returned from Washington to-day. I went there Friday morning on business connected with the reorganization of the army. The night before I left I saw Mr. Wilkeson's attack on me in the Senate and Reverdy Johnston's reply and defense. When I reached Washington I was greatly surprised to find the whole town talking of certain grave charges of Generals Sickles and Doubleday, that had been made against me in their testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. On Saturday I was summoned before the committee. I found there only Mr. Wade, of Ohio. He was very civil, denied there were any charges against me, but said the committee was making up a sort of history of the war and was now taking evidence to enable it to give an account of the battle of Gettysburg, and my administration since commanding the army. I then occupied about three hours giving a succinct narrative of events. Subsequently Mr. Stanton told me (this is strictly confidential), that there was and had been much pressure from a certain party to get Hooker back in command, and that thinking, through Sickles and others, they might get me out (a preliminary step) they had gotten up this halloobaloo in the Committee on the Conduct of the War; but that I need not worry myself, there was no chance of their succeeding. The only evil that will result is the spreading over the country certain mysterious whisperings of dreadful deficiencies on my part, the truth concerning which will never reach the thousandth part of those

who hear the lies. I suppose and fear you will be worried about them, but I beg you to be calm and quiet, and rest satisfied that I will come out all right in the end.

I saw nobody in Washington, except people about the Government, except Mr. Howard, of Michigan, whom I went to see and to whom I explained the absurd charge of Sickles, that I had ordered a retreat at Gettysburg, and that that battle was fought in spite of all my efforts to prevent it.

It is a melancholy state of affairs, however, when persons like Sickles and Doubleday can, by distorting and twisting facts, and giving a false coloring, induce the press and public for a time, and almost immediately, to take away the character of a man who up to that time had stood high in their estimation. However, I suppose we cannot change human nature; we must be patient, await the period when the truth will slowly and surely make itself be known.

You have doubtless seen that Kilpatrick's raid was an utter failure. I did not expect much from it. Poor Dahlgren I am sorry for.

* * * * *

The committee on the conduct of the war played so important a part at this period in the affairs of General Meade, and its action, injurious to his fair fame, and demoralizing to the army he commanded, so frequently forms the burden of the letters immediately following, that it is desirable to supply the basis upon which the statements in those letters were founded, and to add corroborative facts, unknown even to General Meade himself. The nation and posterity, as the highest earthly tribunals to which a man may appeal, shall judge whether, so far as General Meade is concerned, this arraignment is without just cause.

The joint committee was authorized by act of Congress in December, 1861. It was composed of three members of the Senate and four of the House of Representatives, and instructed to examine into the conduct of the war. It was continued through successive Congresses, until after the close of the war, nearly the same members as originally appointed serving throughout its whole existence—certainly the controlling members. The greatest number were selected from the dominant party, and from the extreme wing of that party.

The Army of the Potomac unfortunately furnished, through its proximity to the capital, a fine opportunity to the committee for the exercise of its peculiar theories as to the proper mode of conducting

a great war, and at the committee's door can justly be laid the incentives to most of the intrigues, rivalries, and dissensions that marred the otherwise brilliant record of that army. There were at times some good and true men on the committee, who honestly endeavored to carry out the intention for which it had been organized, but they were overpowered by the controlling element, and their presence is apparent only when, as we see by the printed record, they occasionally, by the interjection of a judicious question to a witness, endeavored to elicit testimony that could not possibly be misconstrued. The bitter animosity of the course of the committee toward General Meade was but a striking example of that with which many other worthy officers were pursued. The reports in his case are a tissue of perverted testimony, elicited with the object plainly in view of breaking down his reputation. Much of the annoyance experienced and expressed by him was owing to the influence of the committee. It sowed the seeds of dissension in his army, and in pursuit of its aims supplied, through its position and influence, much of the false and damaging information which, spread broadcast over the country, influenced the press and misled the public. The committee's voluminous reports, which otherwise would have been the valuable record of a great war, are rendered utterly worthless by the character of many witnesses on whose testimony conclusions are based; by the distortion in some cases, and the suppression in others, of testimony unsuited to its purposes; and even the conclusions reached are rarely borne out by the printed reports of the committee itself.

The committee was composed in March, 1864, of Senator Benjamin F. Wade, of Ohio, Chairman, and Senators Zachariah Chandler, of Michigan, Benjamin F. Harding, of Oregon; Representatives Daniel W. Gooch, of Massachusetts, George W. Julian, of Indiana, Moses F. Odell, of New York, Benjamin F. Loan, of Missouri.

Let us now proceed to examine whether the chief allegation made, of flagrant injustice on the part of the committee to General Meade (for beyond him the province of this work does not extend), is justified by the facts about to be cited.

General Meade, in his last letter of the preceding series, dated March 6, 1864, relates how greatly he was surprised, on his arrival in Washington on March 4, to find the whole town talking of the grave charges that had been made against him before the committee, in connection with the battle of Gettysburg. This was the first intimation he had that the committee was even examining into the

Gettysburg campaign, let alone that any charges had been made against him. He further relates in the letter, that on the next day he had been summoned to appear, and on the following day had appeared, before the committee. This was his first experience of the committee, save in March, 1863, when he had given his brief testimony relating to the battle of Fredericksburg. On the occasion of the committee's examination of witnesses in relation to the campaign and battle of Chancellorsville, much to his gratification he had not been summoned, though it would appear from the published testimony that he played quite a conspicuous part in them, and might reasonably, from his position on the field, have been supposed to know something about them; but for that occasion his knowledge was not of the kind sought by the committee.

Reference to the journal of the committee, which forms part of its voluminous reports, shows what, at the very outset, General Meade had to contend with. It is there seen that the committee had undertaken an investigation of the campaign and battle of Gettysburg, on February 26, 1864, Major-General Daniel E. Sickles being the first witness examined. On March 1, Major-General Abner Doubleday was examined. On March 3, Brigadier-General Albion P. Howe was examined, the giving of his testimony lasting two days. On March 4, immediately after the conclusion of General Howe's testimony, as it is printed in the journal of the committee, appears the following entry:

"The chairman directed the stenographer to enter upon the journal, that, having become impressed with the exceeding importance of the testimony taken by the committee, in relation to the Army of the Potomac, more especially in relation to the incompetency of the general in command of the army, he and Mr. Chandler had believed it to be their duty to call upon the President and the Secretary of War, and lay before them the substance of the testimony taken by them, and, in behalf of the army and the country, demand the removal of General Meade, and the appointment of some one more competent to command. They accordingly did so yesterday afternoon, and being asked what general they could recommend for the command of the Army of the Potomac, they said that, for themselves, they would be content with General Hooker, believing him to be competent; but not being advocates of any particular general they would say, if there was any general whom the President considered more competent for the command, then let him be appointed.

They stated that Congress had appointed the committee to watch the conduct of the war, and unless this state of things should soon be changed, it would be their duty to make the testimony public which had been taken, with such comments as the circumstances of the case seemed to require."

So, by the printed record of the committee, it appears that after the exhaustive examination of the three distinguished military authorities, Generals Sickles, Doubleday, and Howe, and without General Meade having been called upon to testify in his own behalf, Mr. Wade, the chairman, and Mr. Chandler, the two most prominent and active members of the committee, had deemed it their duty to wait upon the President and secretary of war, and "in behalf of the army and the country," demand the removal of General Meade.

To realize the enormity of these proceedings it is necessary for the reader to bear in mind the relation of certain dates to each other. The action of Mr. Wade and his colleague is shown by the journal, as just quoted above, to have been taken on the 3d of March, one day before General Howe's testimony was finished, and it was on the following day, the 4th of March, when the entry in the journal, detailing the visit to the President and secretary, had been made by direction of the chairman, he announced that General Meade happened to be in Washington, and the committee thereupon summoned General Meade to appear before it.

On the 4th of March, therefore, General Meade was summoned to appear before the committee, and on the next day, the 5th of March, he appeared before it, as mentioned in his letter of the 6th of March. He there says, in that letter of the 6th of March, that upon presenting himself, in obedience to the summons of the committee, he found present only Senator Wade, who denied that there were any charges against him, saying that the committee was merely making up a history of the war, and was now taking evidence to enable it to give an account of the battle of Gettysburg. Yet this gentleman who spoke was he who, with his colleague, had only three days before been to see the President and secretary, to request the removal for incompetency of General Meade from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and who, only two days before, had ordered the entry, as quoted, made in the journal immediately before he, as chairman, notified the committee that General Meade was in Washington.

General Meade did, in truth, most inopportunately for the com-

mittee, happen to be in Washington on other business than that in which he suddenly found himself involved. He had come there almost providentially, as it seems, in a crisis in his affairs. Simultaneously with the action of Messrs. Wade and Chandler, and on the very same day, Senator Wilkinson, of Minnesota, made a furious onslaught upon him from his place in the Senate Chamber, but he was by a happy chance there in Washington, to confound his enemies and bring their machinations to naught. With that readiness of resource, and capacity of concentration, that characterized him, he was equal to the occasion so unexpectedly forced upon him. Thus was General Meade suddenly called upon, as much to his surprise, and as much without preparation, as when he was put in command of the Army of the Potomac, at Frederick, Maryland, on the 28th of June, 1863, to prepare to fight what he afterward terms his "second battle of Gettysburg." Without the slightest preparation, without notes, memoranda, reports, or data of any kind, with which to refresh his memory, and with a mind preoccupied with other important and serious subjects, he gave his testimony before the committee.

Here the case may well rest, the evidence, irrefutable and conclusive, having been submitted. It may, however, in conclusion, be of interest to consider what may also be read between the lines of Mr. Wade's entry in the journal of the committee, regarding his and his colleague's conversation with the President as to General Meade's removal from command of the army. Mr. Lincoln's sagacity and honesty of purpose were evidently not at fault. His simple question as to whom they would advise him to choose as a *successor* to General Meade, clearly shows that he, at least, fully understood the gentlemen's anxiety "in behalf of the army and the country." Now, with the knowledge we have of Mr. Lincoln's fairness of character, and in spite of his known admiration for General Hooker, and in view of the fact that Meade was subsequently summoned before this committee, a committee, by the way, of such a nature that, although it had a candidate of its own, it yet, through consciousness of guilt, did not dare to support him and consequently made the evasive reply to Lincoln's question above stated—in view of all this, another question suggests itself: may not Lincoln have rejoined to that evasive reply that it might be well to hear what Meade had to say for himself before condemning him upon the unsupported testimony of three generals who, to say the least, could not be considered the most im-

partial witnesses, and before humiliating and disgracing in the eyes of the world that general who scarce nine months before had assumed, unseeking it, the command of the Army of the Potomac, and within a week thereafter had gained the victory of Gettysburg?

This combined attack in the committee and the Senate upon General Meade, failing of its object, which was his removal, the committee proceeded to the further examination of the subject, hoping to produce so great a mass of damaging testimony as would render the committee's efforts on some future occasion more successful. That it did not eventually succeed was owing primarily to the integrity of Mr. Lincoln and his confidence in General Meade, and secondarily, as General Meade himself often subsequently remarked, to the inability of all the clashing interests opposed to him to combine on one common choice for a successor.

The animus displayed by the committee, as illustrated in the carefully discussed case, is a fair example of its course toward General Meade throughout its whole existence. And it is not to be supposed that the members confined their operations to the inside of the committee room. Coming from different parts of the country, prominent and influential, with a numerous following, they doubtless availed themselves of all the means at their command of disseminating the peculiar kind of information that best suited their object in view. Starting from Washington, the grand centre of all the low intrigues and wild rumors of which those days were so prolific, the information found its way to the outside world, to reappear, commented upon and exaggerated, in the various newspaper organs of each particular clique, manifesting itself in the constant sneers and innuendoes, constant misstatements and falsification of everything connected with the Army of the Potomac and himself, which so annoyed and harassed General Meade, and to which he makes so frequent allusion in his letters. The appointment of Lieutenant-General Grant to the command of all the armies of the United States, and his continuous presence with the Army of the Potomac, caused the command of that army to cease to be a position so much to be sought after, and for a time the labors of the committee to be diverted to other fields; and it was not until the unfortunate affair of the Petersburg mine that it again directed its attention to General Meade, with what success will subsequently appear. In the meantime, however, so far as the press was concerned, the system of misrepresentation and

ignoring General Meade's services continued, from force of habit and other causes, unabated.¹

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To Mrs. George G. Meade :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 8, 1864.

I am curious to see how you take the explosion of the conspiracy to have me relieved, for it is nothing less than a conspiracy, in which the Committee on the Conduct of the War, with Generals Doubleday and Sickles, are the agents. Grant is to be in Washington to-night, and as he is to be commander in chief and responsible for the doings of the Army of the Potomac, he may desire to have his own man in command, particularly as I understand he is indoctrinated with the notion of the superiority of the Western armies, and that the failure of the Army of the Potomac to accomplish anything is due to their commanders.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 9, 1864.

I have answered Mr. Harding's note, likewise one from Cortlandt Parker, and numerous others I have received from sympathizing friends. To prepare a statement and furnish it to all my friends who are desirous of defending me would take too much time. Besides, I intend to await the action of the committee, give them a chance to do me justice, failing which I will publish a pamphlet giving my side of the question. Yesterday's *Tribune* has a most violent attack on me, full of the basest and most malicious slanders, in which, not satisfied with attacking my military reputation, they impugn my loyalty and attribute expressions to me I never dreamed of using.²

Birney and Pleasanton have appeared in the hostile ranks. The latter's course is the meanest and blackest ingratitude; for I can prove, but for my intercession he would have been relieved long since.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 10, 1864.

The storm in which I have been involved seems to be subsiding, as I note the *Tribune* now says that no charges were preferred against me by General Sickles or Doubleday. Tell General Gibbon that I have received his letter, and am greatly obliged to him for his gal-

¹ For General Meade's testimony before the committee on the conduct of the war, see Appendix W.

² For article mentioned, see Appendix H.

lantry and daring in coming out so boldly in my defense; but I do not wish him to compromise himself, and affairs are becoming complicated.

I think I wrote you on my return from Washington I found a polite note from Reverdy Johnston, saying he had assumed the responsibility of denying Mr. Wilkinson's statement, and asking me if he was not right. This act of courtesy I considered entitled to an acknowledgment, so I replied to Mr. Johnston, and explained to him wherein I thought Mr. Wilkinson had been misled. This letter, it appears, Mr. Johnston showed to his friends, and its receipt was announced in *Forney's Chronicle*. To-day I got a sharp letter from the Secretary of War, asking by what authority I wrote to Senators on military operations. I have replied my note was private and not intended for publication or circulation, and that I was not aware I required any authority to write private letters defending myself from the false and slanderous reports with which the public press has been filled for a week, particularly as the military operations referred to took place nine months ago, and the official reports have been published. This may involve me in trouble with the Secretary, but I cannot help it; I will not yield my right to defend myself.

To-day Lieutenant General Grant arrived here. He has been very civil, and said nothing about superseding me.

I go to-morrow to Washington, and shall go again before the committee, to add to my testimony.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 14, 1864.*

I wrote you, I think, on the evening of the 10th, the day Grant was here. It rained all that day, and as he could not see anything, he determined to return to Washington the next day. The President having invited both General Grant and myself to dinner on Saturday, the 12th, I had of course to go up to Washington, and as I wanted to add to my testimony to the committee, I concluded to go up with General Grant. When I arrived, I immediately went before the committee and filed documentary evidence to prove the correctness of my previous assertion that I never for an instant had any idea of fighting anywhere but at Gettysburg, as soon as I learned of Reynolds's collision and obtained information that the ground was suitable. Mr. Wade was the only member present. He took great pains to endeavor to convince me the committee were not responsible for the newspaper attacks on me, and I might rest assured there was no dis-

position on their part to do me injustice. Afterwards I saw Mr. Stanton, who told me Mr. Wade had been to see him, and said my testimony was the clearest statement that had ever been made to the committee, and that, as far as he could see, it was perfectly satisfactory in explanation of all charges against me. I soon found the tide had turned in my favor, and that Sickles had overreached himself. I also ascertained that Chandler and Wilkinson were my foes on the committee, that Wade was rather friendly, and that Harding, of the Senate, Gooch and Odell, of the House, were my warm friends.

I think I wrote to you that the Secretary had officially inquired of me by what authority I had written to Hon. Reverdy Johnston, a Senator, about military affairs, and that I had replied to him I did not require any authority to write a private letter to a friend, defending myself from slanders. When I saw Mr. Stanton I referred to this matter, when he told me his letter had been written in my interest; that I had made a great mistake in writing to Mr. Johnston, who was showing it to everybody, and making it appear he was my chosen champion; and that his political status was such that any identification with him could not fail to damage me and my cause. He said he was aware of how I had been led into the step, and all he wanted was just such a reply as I had made, which he would now show to Senators and Representatives when they called on him to know what my relations were with Reverdy Johnston. I fortunately met Mr. Johnston in the street, begged him to consider my letter strictly private, and borrowed it to copy for file in the War Department.

I think I told you I was very much pleased with General Grant. In the views he expressed to me he showed much more capacity and character than I had expected. I spoke to him very plainly about my position, offered to vacate the command of the Army of the Potomac, in case he had a preference for any other. This he declined in a complimentary speech, but indicated to me his intention, when in this part of the country, of being with my army. So that you may look now for the Army of the Potomac putting laurels on the brows of another rather than your husband.

To Mr. Henry A. Cram,¹ New York:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 15, 1864.

I received your note in due course of mail, but was so busy at the time I could not reply. It was hardly necessary for you to write

¹ Brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

that you would do anything in my defense, because I shall always fully count on you in this way. I was glad to have your sympathy, because I am free to confess the suddenness of this attack, its injurious combination of several interests against me, that really have no particular cause of complaint, has in reality astounded me and for awhile I was embarrassed what to do. I believe now, however, I have produced a reaction in my behalf, simply by exposing the character and motives of my assailants. I feared the Committee on the Conduct of the War was against me, and that their examination would be *ex-parte*; to which their organization, the absence of myself or counsel, the ignorance I am under of what is testified against me, all combine to give great power for injury, if abused. Fortunately my friend Mr. Odell is on this committee, and although hitherto a great friend of my principal adversary, he is most indignant at the course pursued, and has entered heart and soul into the determination to see justice done. Now this is all I ask, a thorough investigation of the whole matter and the bringing out the truth.

The ingenuity of my enemies, in the theory of their attack, is worthy of admiration. They acknowledge the battle of Gettysburg as one of the greatest victories the world has ever seen; but they expect to prove that it was fought in *opposition* to all the plans I had formed; that I was all the time expecting disaster and issuing orders to retreat; in fine, that had I not been there, great as was the battle, it would have been far greater. Now, although I can tear away all this flimsy framework of argument in this operation, I shall have to expose that as a prudent general, whilst my orders were always looking to fighting, I did at times, in discussions, councils, preparatory orders, etc., hold in view the contingency of a reverse and endeavor to be prepared for it. This is the sum and substance of my offense, and I regret to say that, among a certain class of my fellow-countrymen, this will be an offense and indicative of what they call *too much caution*, and being paralyzed by contingent reverses, proving that I did not have the dash and blundering audacity of others.

My enemies consist of certain politicians who wish me removed to restore Hooker; then of certain subordinates, whose military reputations are involved in the destruction of mine; finally, a class of vultures who in Hooker's day preyed upon the army, and who sigh for a return of those glorious days. I expect to retain my place, but I am anxious about my reputation.

A very good article has been sent to me in the new paper in your

city called the *Round Table*.¹ I wish, if you know the editors, you would, in my name, thank them for their generous interposition in my behalf. I am of the opinion that the characters and motives of my assailants have been of immense benefit, in staying public judgment before I could reply. I should like to see that article republished over the country, also one from the *Times*, which was no more personal, but discussed temperately the destruction of all subordination and discipline in an army where the inferior generals were spies and critics of their commanding general.

I think my testimony will pull the lion's skin off of some of my disguised foes, and that they will perhaps, before the thing is over, repent they ever meddled with it. Already the liars have disclaimed any intention to attack me, and in evidence produce the article in the *Herald* signed Historicus, which you have doubtless read, and which is filled with false and perverted statements, which have astonished even myself, and those around me, who have great respect for the capacity, adroitness and skill in this respect of my opponents.²

Give my love to Kate,³ and tell her I shall come out of this last battle of Gettysburg with flying colors.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 16, 1864.

My Gettysburg fight is at present *in statu quo*, except that I have enclosed to the War Department the letter from the New York *Herald*, of the 12th, signed Historicus, saying I believed it was written, or dictated, by General Sickles, and that I desire he may be called on to state whether he authorized it, or endorses it; and should he reply in the affirmative, I then ask for a court of inquiry. If the department is not disposed to accede to this, I then ask permission to make public such official documents as I deem necessary to my defense.

George⁴ has gone to a ball to-night, given in the Fifth Corps. I thought I had better keep quiet at home, and not expose myself, as my cold, though better, still hangs about me. These balls were always against my judgment, and I see they are beginning to be animadverted on by those who are unfriendly to this army, and who are ready to catch at anything to find fault with.

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix I.

² For article mentioned, see Appendix J.

³ Wife of Mr. Cram.

⁴ Son of General Meade.

As I told you, I was much pleased with Grant, and most agreeably disappointed in his evidence of mind and character. You may rest assured he is not an ordinary man.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 18, 1864.*

I see General Grant's assuming command and announcing that his headquarters will be with the Army of the Potomac, is in the public journals, and by to-morrow will be known in Richmond. Of course this will notify the rebels where to look for active operations, and they will prepare accordingly.

You need not think I apprehend any trouble about my being relieved. I don't think I have at any time been in any danger. It would be almost a farce to relieve the man who fought the battle of Gettysburg, nine months after the battle, not *for retreating*, not *for ordering a retreat*, but *for preparing an order*, which was never issued; for such is the last and most serious charge against me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 20, 1864.*

I have received a letter from Gibbon which has worried me a great deal. It is now evident that Butterfield, either intentionally or otherwise, misconstrued something that I said to him on the 2d of July into instructions to prepare an order to withdraw the army. To-be-sure, this order was never issued; it is also certain I never intended it to be prepared, much less issued. Nevertheless, the fact that he did prepare it, and, as he will swear, was ordered to do so, notwithstanding it was never issued, will operate against me, as people disposed to find fault will say I was all the time anticipating defeat, and hampered accordingly. God knows my conscience is clear that I never for a moment thought of retreating, although I presume I held in view the contingency that the enemy might compel me so to do, and I may have told Butterfield to familiarize himself with the roads, etc., so that if it became necessary we would be prepared to do it promptly and in good order. Out of this he has manufactured the lie that I intended *at the time* to do so. The falsehoods that have been uttered against me, and the evidence of a regular conspiracy which has been organizing almost since the date of the battle, make me heartsick. I believe now that Butterfield commenced deliberately, from the time I assumed command, to treasure up incidents, remarks and papers to pervert and distort in the future to my injury. How otherwise to account for his having a copy of this pretended

order? Not only is no such order or paper found among the records of the Adjutant General's Office, but the clerks and others have no recollection of any order.

It is hard that I am to suffer from the malice of such men as Sickles and Butterfield.

Grant is expected here next Wednesday. He spoke very fairly when here last, and from all I can hear of what he has said of me to others, I ought to be satisfied, as I understand he expressed every confidence in me, and said no change would be made in the command, as far as he was concerned. Still, he undoubtedly will have the power, and will exercise it, of bringing here such a force as will effect results that hitherto I have been unable to effect, and this will by the ignorant public be set down to his superior merit and quoted against me. However, I shall do my duty to the best of my ability, and trust to Providence.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 22, 1864.*

Grant is emphatically an executive man, whose only place is in the field. One object in coming here is to avoid Washington and its *entourage*. I intend to give him heartiest co-operation, and so far as I am able do just the same when he is present that I would do were he absent.

Hancock is in Washington and will be down to-morrow. He was before the committee to-day. Humphreys has returned, having been before the committee, where he gave testimony about Gettysburg. Have you seen the article in the *Herald*, signed "Staff Officer, Fifth Corps,"¹ and one in Monday's (yesterday's) paper signed by General Barnes?² I think Historicus after awhile will be sick of his only true and authentic account of the battle.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 24, 1864.*

I have been very busy to-day. The much-talked-of order for reorganizing the Army of the Potomac has at last appeared. Sykes, French and Newton are relieved. Sedgwick, Hancock and Warren command the three corps. This evening an order has arrived relieving General Pleasanton, which, although I did not originate it, yet was, I presume, brought about by my telling the Secretary that the opposition I had hitherto made to his removal I no longer should

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix K.

² For article mentioned, see Appendix L.

make. As the Secretary has been desirous of relieving him ever since I have had command, and I have been objecting, he has taken the first chance to remove him as soon as my objections were withdrawn.

Grant arrived to-day. I met him at the depot near my headquarters and accompanied him to Culpeper, where I spent several hours and returned. He was as affable as ever, and seems not at all disposed to interfere with my army in any details.

I hear Butterfield is in Washington, and is going to swear that I told him to prepare an order to retreat, and from what Gibbon writes me, it is evident he did prepare such an order; but I trust by the concurrent testimony of every other officer on the field, the documentary evidence in the shape of orders at different periods of the day, and my own sworn statement, to prove that the preparation of this order was not authorized by me, and that it was due to Butterfield's own fears. I understand the Secretary is very indignant at his coming to Washington, and has ordered him back to his post.

Get the last number of the *Spirit of the Times*, in which there is a scathing article on Grant, Sherman, McPherson, Schofield and myself, and lauding, as usual, Joe Hooker.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 26, 1864.

Pennie¹ arrived yesterday, looking very well and quite delighted with his journey and at getting to camp. Willie and Davy Whipple came with him. Unfortunately they came in a storm of rain, and although to-day has been blustering and raw, they have been out on horseback, commencing their sight seeing. This evening they have gone over to one of the neighboring camps, where the soldiers are going to have a negro minstrel exhibition.

The weather has been so unpropitious that no inspection has been practicable by General Grant. I spent several hours with him yesterday. He appears very friendly, and at once adopts all my suggestions. I believe Grant is honest and fair, and I have no doubt he will give me full credit for anything I may do, and if I don't deserve any, I don't desire it.

I think I wrote you I had a long and friendly letter from Mr. Harding, in which he said he had seen Mr. Stanton, who told him of my letter in reference to Sickles, asking for a court of inquiry, which Mr. Stanton said he should not grant, for the reason that he did not deem one necessary; that I had been made a brigadier general in the regular army and thanked by Congress for my services at Gettysburg,

¹ Spencer Meade, son of General Meade.

and that no attention should be paid to such a person as Sickles. Mr. Stanton told Mr. Harding he thought I was unnecessarily nervous about these attacks, and that I ought not to give them a thought. I, however, think differently, and do not believe in the policy of remaining quiet, under the false and slanderous charges of even the most insignificant.

Tell Sargie¹ two copies of the famous "Life and Services of Major General Meade" have been sent me by the publishers. I had no idea my services would take up so much printing matter. I must confess I think a little more space might be given to my services prior to the Rebellion. I always thought my services in the construction of lighthouses, and subsequently on the Lake Survey, were of considerable importance.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

Easter Sunday, *March 27, 1864.*

Your letter of the 25th inst. arrived this afternoon. I am very much distressed to hear of Sergeant's continued weakness. As to my going home, that is utterly out of the question. You must not expect to see me till next winter, unless, as before, I am brought home on a litter. Whatever occurs, I shall not voluntarily leave the field.

We have had most interesting services to-day by Bishop Whipple, who administered the Holy Communion to quite a number of officers and soldiers, hastily collected from the staff and the detachments on duty at these headquarters. We had afternoon services, and afterwards the bishop and his assistant, with General Seth Williams, dined with me. The bishop brought down with him a magnificent bouquet of flowers, with which our rude altar was adorned. The bishop is a most interesting man, about forty years of age, but full of life and energy. He preached two most appropriate and impressive discourses, well adapted to all classes of his hearers.

General Grant went up to Washington to-day, expecting to return to-morrow. You do not do Grant justice, and I am sorry to see it. You do not make a distinction between his own acts and those forced on him by the Government, Congress and public opinion. If left to himself, I have no doubt Grant would have let me alone; but placed in the position he holds, and with the expectations formed of him, if operations on a great scale are to be carried on here, he could not well have kept aloof. As yet he has indicated no purpose to inter-

¹ Son of General Meade.

fere with me; on the contrary, acts promptly on all my suggestions, and seems desirous of making his stay here only the means of strengthening and increasing my forces. God knows I shall hail his advent with delight if it results in carrying on operations in the manner I have always desired they should be carried on. Cheerfully will I give him all credit if he can bring the war to a close.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 29, 1864.*

Spencer¹ and the Whipple boys continue to enjoy themselves. Yesterday was a fine day, and they rode over with me to Hancock's, some five miles. We then rode to Culpeper Court House, five miles, where I met General Grant, just from Washington. After which we returned to headquarters, a distance of six miles, making in all sixteen miles for the day's riding. *En route* the boys ascended Pony Mountain, a hill of some five hundred feet elevation, near Culpeper, on which we have a signal station and a fine telescope, and from whence you have a good view of the country, the rebel lines, camps, etc. At night Pennie was pretty well fatigued. But this morning he was up bright and early, and started with me, before eight o'clock, to go to Culpeper, where General Grant reviewed two divisions of infantry, and one of cavalry. It commenced to rain, however, during the review, which curtailed the ceremonies, and after spending an hour with Grant, we returned home in the rain. I borrowed an india rubber poncho for Pennie, so that he came back dry, but on the way his horse, and Willie Whipple's, became excited and started off with them at full speed. The boys, however, kept their seats beautifully till George² and an orderly headed off the horses and stopped them.

Grant continues very affable and quite confidential. He laughs at the statement in the papers of his remarks about balls, etc., and says he will be happy to attend any innocent amusement we may get up, he including among these horse races, of which he is very fond.

I join with you in the regret expressed at the relief of Sykes. I tried very hard to retain Sykes, Newton, and even French, as division commanders, but without avail. I had very hard work to retain Sedgwick. As to Pleasanton, his being relieved was entirely the work of Grant and Stanton.

I hear Butterfield has been swearing terribly against me. I shall go up day after to-morrow to meet his charges.

It is storming now violently.

¹ Son of General Meade.

² Son of General Meade.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 1, 1864.*

I came up yesterday with Grant, am going to-day before the committee to answer Dan Butterfield's falsehoods. Shall return to-morrow. I am all right, and every one is most civil to me. I will write more fully on my return.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 2, 1864.*

I left Washington this morning, bidding dear Pennie¹ good-bye at the hotel, which he was to leave half an hour after me. He has had a pretty pleasant time, and his visit has been a source of great happiness to me.

I enclose you a letter I addressed the Department,² with an autograph reply from the President.³ I feel quite sure the President meant to be very kind and complimentary in paying me the distinguished honor of writing a reply in his own hand, and under this conviction I am bound to be satisfied. You will perceive, however, that the main point of my request is avoided, namely, my desire that the letter of *Historicus* should be submitted, with my letter, to General Sickles, and if he acknowledged or endorsed it, then I wished a court of inquiry, not otherwise. However, Mr. Stanton told me the true reason, which was that it was concluded submitting the letter to Sickles was only playing into his hands; that a court of inquiry, if called at my request, although it might exonerate me, yet it would not necessarily criminate him; and that, on the whole, it was deemed best not to take any action. Butterfield, I hear, was very bitter in his testimony, and made wonderful revelations. I went before the committee yesterday and replied only to his assertion that I instructed him to draw up an order to retreat. This I emphatically denied; also denied any knowledge of his having drawn up such an order; presented documentary evidence to show that, if I had any such idea, that my orders and despatches were contradictory, and referred to numerous officers who ought to have and would have known if I entertained any idea of the kind.⁴

I find I have three warm friends on the committee—Odell of New

¹ Spencer Meade, son of General Meade.

² For letter mentioned, see Appendix M.

³ For letter mentioned, see Appendix N.

⁴ This attack on General Meade was continued until long after the war, and even after his death, when, in defence of General Meade, Colonel Meade published in 1883 a pamphlet entitled, "Did General Meade Desire to Retreat at the Battle of Gettysburg?" For pamphlet, see Appendix Y.

York, Gooch of Massachusetts, and Harding of Oregon. It is believed Wade, of Ohio, is favorably inclined. If either he or one of the others should prove so, it would make a majority in my favor. Old Zach Chandler is my bitterest foe and will show me no quarter. While going up to Washington I had a long and satisfactory talk with Grant, who has expressed himself and acted towards me in the most friendly manner. Among other things he said he heard Horace Greeley had been in Washington, demanding my removal, and that Thomas be brought here. Grant said, if he saw Greeley he should tell him that when he wanted the advice of a political editor in selecting generals, he would call on him. The President, Secretary, indeed every one I met, were civil and affable to me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 4, 1864.*

If you believe all you see in the papers about Grant, you will be greatly deceived. All that I have seen are pure inventions. I mean such stories as his being opposed to reviews, balls, etc., having given orders to stop them; of inviting soldiers into his car; of announcing his displeasure at the luxury of the officers of the Army of the Potomac, that all he wanted was soldiers' fare, pork and beans; of the enthusiasm with which he is received by the soldiers, etc., etc. All these are humbugs, and known to the writers to be without foundation, but are persistently put forth for some purpose unknown. When he first came down he said he wished to keep out of Washington as much as possible, and it was his intention while in this part of the country to remain with my army, and he asked me where he could find a good house for his headquarters. I told him his only chance was either in Warrenton or Culpeper; that the former was rather out of the way, and that I thought he could readily get one in the latter place, which he did; whereupon the newspapers announced him as establishing his headquarters eight miles nearer the enemy than even I did. Not content with puffing him, they must have a fling at me. Grant is very much annoyed at the foolish way they are mentioning his name; but it is a matter he cannot very well notice. As I have before told you, he is very well disposed towards me, and has talked very freely and properly about my particular friends Hooker, Sickles and Butterfield.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 6, 1864.*

General Grant returned yesterday, and I have seen him to-day. Nothing new or important has transpired.

General Hunt has been up to Washington and before the committee. He says, after questioning him about the famous order of July 2, and his telling them he never heard of it, and from his position and relations with me would certainly have heard of it, they went to work and in the most pettifogging way, by a cross-examination, tried to get him to admit such an order might have been issued without his knowing anything about it. This, after my testimony, and that of Warren, Hancock, Gibbon and Hunt, evidently proves they are determined to convict me, in spite of testimony, and that Butterfield's perjury is to outweigh the testimony of all others. I suppose you have seen the last effusion of *Historicus*. There is no doubt now about the author, as he quotes a private letter from Birney, which could not have been written to any one but Sickles. The best joke is that Barnes, it is said, has a letter from Birney, denying that he ever made any statements of the kind quoted in his letter to *Historicus*. Is it not too bad that one's reputation should be in the hands of such men?

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, April 8, 1864.

The New York *Tribune* of yesterday informs the world it has been positively ascertained that I am and have been in constant correspondence with McClellan, and that this fact has destroyed all my chances for nomination as major general in the regular army, but it is not believed it will remove me from command. I know where this *canard* comes from. Grant told me that he had received several visits and innumerable letters from that old crazy man Gurowsky, all to the effect that I was completely under the influence of McClellan, and in constant correspondence with him, and urging Grant to relieve me. I saw *Historicus*'s last effort, and was greatly amused at the very powerful position that he assigned me in the despotism he asserts I have exercised in the face of the lieutenant general and others.¹ I am sure I ought to be flattered that I am allowed to exercise such powers. It is a redeeming trait in the powers that be, and in my countrymen, that the base and persistent attacks on me have so signally failed, principally from the bad standing of my assailants. As to my being nominated for the regular army, I never dreamed of it, though I always believed the secret of some of the attacks on me was to remove a rival from some one who did want and expected to be nominated.

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix O. For General Meade's letter to Colonel G. G. Benedict, of March 16, 1870, on the battle of Gettysburg, see Appendix V.

I think it a pity Philadelphia was so late in getting up its fair. The subject will be so thoroughly exhausted that people will be tired with such matters. Still, there seems to be great spirit evinced by those who have it in charge.

I have now as a guest Lieutenant Colonel Strave, of the Russian Engineers, who seems a young man of intelligence. He came down with letters from Mr. Seward and Mr. Stanton.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 11, 1864.*

There is no doubt General Birney is scared at the turn things have taken in the Sickles matter, for I received a note from Hancock, the other day, saying Birney had been to see him, disclaiming being a partisan of Sickles, and saying he would like to come and see me to explain matters, but did not like to do so without some intimation on my part that it would be agreeable. I replied to Hancock that I was not aware of there being any occasion for explanation on the part of General Birney, as I had heard nothing except what I had seen in the papers about his testimony, and *that* he had denied in writing. At the same time I was always ready to see General Birney whenever he chose to do me the honor to call.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 13, 1864.*

Grant has not given an order, or in the slightest degree interfered with the administration of this army since he arrived, and I doubt if he knows much more about it now than he did before coming here. It is undoubtedly true he will go with it when it moves, and will in a measure control its movements, and should success attend its operations, that my share of the credit will be less than if he were not present. Moreover, whilst I have no doubt he will give me all the credit I am entitled to, the press, and perhaps the public, will lose sight of me in *him*. Nevertheless he is so much more active than his predecessor, and agrees so well with me in his views, I cannot but be rejoiced at his arrival, because I believe success to be the more probable from the above facts. My position before, with inadequate means, no power myself to increase them, and no effort made by others to do so, placed me in a false position, causing me to be held responsible, when in fact I could do nothing. My duty is plain, to continue quietly to discharge my duties, heartily co-operating with him and under him.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 16, 1864.*

General Grant returned yesterday. The papers will tell you I was present the other day when Hancock reviewed Birney's division, and the next day, when he reviewed Carr's and Gibbon's divisions. These troops all looked splendidly, and seemed, officers and men, in fine spirits.

The reorganization, now that it is over, meets with universal approbation, and I believe I have gained great credit for the manner in which so disagreeable an operation was made acceptable to those concerned. Even General Birney, of the smashed up Third Corps, is, I believe, reconciled.

How much I should like to see you all. At times I feel very despondent about the termination of this war and the prospect of my return, but I try to keep up my spirits and hope for the best.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 18, 1864.*

I had an interview with General Birney to-day, who disclaimed ever having entertained unfriendly feelings towards me, or being a partisan of Sickles, and expressed the hope he would be permitted to serve under me. I listened to all he had to say, but made no reply, except that I had never heard he had any unfriendly feelings towards me.

To-day Grant reviewed the Sixth Corps (Sedgwick's). It was a fine day, and the men looked and marched finely. Grant expressed himself highly pleased, and is quite astonished at our system and organization.

I see a letter I wrote to a Mr. Bond, Chairman of Committee on Labor, Income and Revenue, has already gotten into the papers. I declare I am almost afraid to put pen to paper, when writing to any one but you. I had supposed that my present humble position would shield me from getting into print, and that letters from Grant only would be of value. You would be amused to see the worshipping of the rising sun by certain officers in this army; but Grant behaves very handsomely, and immediately refers to me all the letters and communications he gets from my subordinates, who apply to him when they have axes to grind. I have received a letter from General Lee, enclosing photographic copies of the papers found on Colonel Dahlgren, and asking whether these papers were authorized, sanctioned or approved by the Government of the United States, or Colonel Dahlgren's superior officers. This was a pretty ugly

piece of business; for in denying having authorized or approved "the burning of Richmond, or killing Mr. Davis and Cabinet," I necessarily threw odium on Dahlgren. I, however, enclosed a letter from Kilpatrick, in which the authenticity of the papers was impugned; but I regret to say Kilpatrick's reputation, and collateral evidence in my possession, rather go against this theory. However, I was determined my skirts should be clear, so I promptly disavowed having ever authorized, sanctioned or approved of any act not required by military necessity, and in accordance with the usages of war.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 24, 1864.*

Cram and John Cadwalader arrived yesterday afternoon. To-day Cram went to church with me, where we heard an excellent sermon from a Mr. Adams, a distinguished Presbyterian clergyman from New York. After church I drove Cram and Cadwalader to Culpeper, where we paid a visit to General Grant. After coming away, I plainly saw Cram was disappointed. Grant is not a striking man, is very reticent, has never mixed with the world, and has but little manner, indeed is somewhat ill at ease in the presence of strangers; hence a first impression is never favorable. His early education was undoubtedly very slight; in fact, I fancy his West Point course was pretty much all the education he ever had, as since his graduation I don't believe he has read or studied any. At the same time, he has natural qualities of a high order, and is a man whom, the more you see and know him, the better you like him. He puts me in mind of old Taylor, and sometimes I fancy he models himself on old Zac.

Yesterday I sent my orderly with old Baldy to Philadelphia. He will never be fit again for hard service, and I thought he was entitled to better care than could be given to him on the march.

I have just had a visit from a very intelligent young Englishman, named Stanley, a son of Lord Stanley, of Alderney. He is no relative, I believe, to the Earl of Derby, though his father is in the Ministry as Secretary for the Colonies. He is quite young (only twenty-four) but highly educated, very smart and clever, and full of information. He brought me a letter from Mr. Seward, and spent a day with us seeing the army sights.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 26, 1864.*

I have had a very satisfactory time with Cram, and am sorry he and Cadwalader are going back. I have sent by Mr. Cadwalader,

who will stop in Philadelphia and give it to you, a copy of my testimony before the committee. You must keep this private and sacred. If anything should happen to me, you will have the means of showing to the world what my defense was.

My relations with Grant continue friendly and confidential, and I see no disposition on his part to take advantage of his position.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *May 1, 1864.*

I am sorry for your trouble about the generals. Augur happened to be in my tent when I received your letter, and I told him of your distress. He said if you would send him the names of those you wished, he thought he could get their photographs for you. I will ask Sheridan for his. He is our new cavalry commander, and quite distinguished.

I have to-night a note from a Mrs. Brown, 1113 Girard Street, on the Dry Goods Committee, asking for a lock of my hair, but I have been compelled to decline on the ground of the shortness of my locks.

The weather continues fine, and the time approaches for active operations. Some indications would lead to the belief that Lee will take the initiative, but I can hardly believe he will be so blind to the experience of the two past campaigns. The defensive policy is clearly the true one for him; still, he may not think so.

I don't think I told you I had a visit from Mr. Sypher, formerly a correspondent of the *Inquirer*, but afterwards of the *Tribune*. He is a great friend of Thaddeus Stevens, and lives in the same house with him in Washington. He told me Mr. Stevens was a firm friend of mine, and recently, when some member was attacking me in conversation, he brought against me the charge that I was an aristocrat. Mr. Stevens laughed and said he knew all about my family, and he wished the country had more such aristocrats.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *May 3, 1864.*

I send herewith original letter recently received from General Lee, which you can give to Pennie,¹ as it has General Lee's autograph, and on the envelope an original endorsement by Jeb Stuart, the great reb. cavalry general.

I also enclose you a printed copy of an address issued to-day by me to the army. To-morrow we move. I hope and trust we will be successful, and so decidedly successful as to bring about a termina-

¹ Spencer Meade, son of General Meade.

tion of this war. If hard fighting will do it, I am sure I can rely on my men. They are in fine condition and in most excellent spirits, and will do all that men can do to accomplish the object. The enemy have had time, I expect, to bring up all available reinforcements. This is all the better for us, if we succeed, as it will make the battle and victory more decisive. The telegraph will convey to you the first intelligence, though I shall endeavor to keep you posted. I beg of you to be calm and resigned, to place full trust in the mercy of our heavenly Father, who has up to this time so signally favored us, and the continuance of whose blessing we should earnestly pray for. Do not fret, but be cheerful, and go about and do just as if nothing was going on, and above all things don't anticipate evil; it will come time enough. Give my love to all the dear children. I shall think a great deal of you and them, notwithstanding the excitement of my duties. I feel quiet and determined, satisfied I have ever striven to do my duty to the best of my ability, and believing that in time posterity will do justice to my career. Good-by! God bless and protect us all!

"Address" mentioned in last letter:

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *May 4, 1864.*

SOLDIERS!

Again you are called upon to advance on the enemies of your country. The time and the occasion are deemed opportune by your Commanding General to address you a few words of confidence and caution.

You have been re-organized, strengthened and fully equipped in every respect. You form a part of the several armies of your country, the whole under the direction of an able and distinguished General, who enjoys the confidence of the government, the people and the army. Your movement being in co-operation with others, it is of the utmost importance that no effort should be left unspared to make it successful.

Soldiers! the eyes of the whole country are looking with anxious hope to the blow you are about to strike in the most sacred cause that ever called men to arms.

Remember your homes, your wives and children, and bear in mind that the sooner your enemies are overcome, the sooner you will be returned to enjoy the benefits and blessings of peace. Bear

with patience the hardships and sacrifices you will be called upon to endure. Have confidence in your officers and in each other. Keep your ranks on the march and on the battlefield, and let each man earnestly implore God's blessing and endeavor by his thoughts and actions to render himself worthy of the favor he seeks. With clear consciences and strong arms, actuated by a high sense of duty, fighting to preserve the Government and the institutions handed down to us by our forefathers—if true to ourselves—victory, under God's blessing, must and will attend our efforts.¹

GEO. G. MEADE,

Official: *Major General Commanding.*
ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

BATTLE-FIELD, SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, May 11—9 A. M.

I have only time to tell you we are all safe—that is, George² and myself—and as far as I know, all your friends, except General Wadsworth, who fell into the hands of the enemy, mortally wounded, without hopes of life.

We have been fighting continuously for six days, and have gotten, I think, decidedly the better of the enemy, though their resistance is most stubborn.

Return thanks to the Almighty for the gracious protection extended to us, and let us try to deserve its continuance.

I am quite well and in good spirits, and hope we shall continue to be successful and bring this unhappy war to an honorable close.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

May 12, 1864—2 o'clock, P. M.

A severe battle is raging, with the advantages thus far on our side. We have captured to-day over thirty guns, four thousand prisoners, including three generals. The enemy are strongly posted and entrenched, which, with their desperation, makes the struggle stubborn.

¹ The advance which was about to be made is known as the "Virginia Campaign of 1864." It consisted of stubborn, continuous fighting, with frightful losses. The Army of the Potomac had been reorganized and reinforced to an aggregate of 127,471 men (O. R.). The Army of Northern Virginia had an aggregate of about 80,000 men.

² Son of General Meade.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 8 A. M., *May 13, 1864.*

By the blessing of God I am able to announce not only the safety of George¹ and myself, but a decided victory over the enemy, he having abandoned last night the position he so tenaciously held yesterday. Eight days of continuous fighting have thus resulted with the loss to the enemy of over thirty guns and eight thousand prisoners. Our losses have been frightful; I do not like to estimate them. Those of the enemy fully as great. Our work is not over, but we have the prestige of success, which is everything, and I trust our final success will be assured. I have not time to write much. God's blessing be with you and the dear children! Pray earnestly for our success.

SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE BATTLE-FIELD, *May 15, 9 P. M.*

A lull in the roar of battle enables me to write you a few lines. It has been raining hard, both yesterday and to-day, putting the roads in such condition as to compel both armies to keep still—a rest that the men on both sides were glad to have. I do not see the papers, and therefore cannot tell how true their accounts are, and I have not time to give you any details. I think we have gained decided advantages over the enemy; nevertheless, he confronts us still, and, owing to the strong position he occupies, and the works he is all the time throwing up, the task of overcoming him is a very difficult one, taxing all our energies. I send you a letter received from the Secretary of War, for safe keeping, as it shows I am not utterly ignored by the Department. General Grant showed me a despatch he had written to the War Department, speaking in complimentary terms of my services, and asking I be made a major general in the regular army. I told him I was obliged to him for his good opinion, but that I asked and expected nothing from the Government, and that I did not myself attach any importance to being in the regular army, so long as I held an equal rank in the volunteer service. What the result will be I cannot tell.

May 16, 9 A. M.

The weather still continues unfavorable for military operations, so, unless the enemy attack us, we shall probably remain quiet to-day. Our cavalry, under Sheridan, have been heard from. He was sent to get in the enemy's rear, destroy their communications and supplies, fight their cavalry, and when his forage was exhausted, make

¹ Son of General Meade.

his way to Butler,¹ on the James River. He reports having executed his orders, and it is said that J. E. B. Stuart was killed in the battle with Sheridan.²

“Letter” and “despatch” mentioned in last letter:

Stanton to Meade (in part):

WASHINGTON CITY, May 12, 1864.

This department congratulates you and your heroic Army and returns its cordial thanks for their gallant achievements during the last seven days, and hopes that the valor and skill thus far manifested will be crowned with the fruits of ultimate and decisive victory.

Grant to Stanton (in part):

May 13, 1864.

General Meade has more than met my most sanguine expectations. He and Sherman are the fittest officers for large commands I have come in contact with. If their services can be rewarded by promotion to the ranks of major-generals in the regular army the honor would be worthily bestowed, and I would feel personally gratified. I would not like to see one of these promotions at this time without seeing both.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, May 17, 1864.

To-morrow we shall begin fighting again, with, I trust, some decided result, for it is hardly natural to expect men to maintain without limit the exhaustion of such a protracted struggle as we have been carrying on.

The last few days have given our men rest, and the arrival of reinforcements has put them in good spirits. There is a determination on all sides to fight it out, and have an end put to the war; a result which I think will most certainly be accomplished if we can overcome the army before us.

I received to-day a kind letter from Mr. Gerhard,³ written from his sick room, and informing me of the generosity of kind friends in

¹ General Benjamin F. Butler, commanding the Army of the James.

² Battle of Yellow Tavern, near Richmond, Va., May 11, 1864.

³ Benjamin Gerhard, brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

Philadelphia, who had subscribed to pay for your house in DeLancey Place. I have replied to Mr. Gerhard, and whilst I have tried to express my sense of the generosity of my friends, I have declined the gift, believing that, under existing circumstances, it would not be proper in me to accept. At the same time I have said if it should be God's will that I should fall in this war, then anything to assist you and my orphans would be most gratefully and thankfully received. I hope you will approve of my course, and that my feelings will be understood. It would not do to lose our independence, and I don't think we would be comfortable in a house bought with our friends' money.

I have been riding all day, getting ready for to-morrow's battle. I shall now retire to rest, earnestly praying God to protect us, and give victory to our side.¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, May 19, 1864.

All goes on well up to this time. We did not have the big battle which I expected yesterday, as, on advancing, we found the enemy so strongly entrenched that even Grant thought it useless to knock our heads against a brick wall, and directed a suspension of the attack. We shall now try to manœuvre again, so as to draw the enemy out of his stronghold, and hope to have a fight with him before he can dig himself into an impregnable position.

We have recent Richmond papers containing Lee's congratulatory address to his army, so you see both sides claim having gained the advantage. Lee, however, seems to think they have gained their point when they check us.

Yesterday I had a visit from Senators Sherman, of Ohio, and Sprague, of Rhode Island; both were very complimentary to me, and wished me to know that in Washington it was well understood these were my battles. I told them such was not the case; that at first I had manœvered the army, but that gradually, and from the very nature of things, Grant had taken the control; and that it would be injurious to the army to have two heads. I see one of the newspaper men is puzzled to know what share we each have in the work, and settles it by saying Grant does the grand strategy, and I the grand tactics. Coppée in his *Army Magazine* says, "the Army of

¹ Battle of the Wilderness, May 5-7, 1864. Battle of Spottsylvania Court House, May 8-18, 1864. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—May 5-21, 1864—39,791 (O. R.).

the Potomac, directed by Grant, commanded by Meade, and led by Hancock, Sedgwick and Warren," which is a quite good distinction, and about hits the nail on the head.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 8 A. M., May 23, 1864.

We expected yesterday to have another battle, but the enemy refuses to fight unless attacked in strong entrenchments; hence, when we moved on his flank, instead of coming out of his works and attacking us, he has fallen back from Spottsylvania Court House, and taken up a new position behind the North Anna River; in other words, performed the same operation which I did last fall, when I fell back from Culpeper, and for which I was ridiculed; that is to say, refusing to fight on my adversary's terms. I suppose now we will have to repeat this turning operation, and continue to do so, till Lee gets into Richmond.

I am sorry you will not change your opinion of Grant. I think you expect too much of him. I don't think he is a very magnanimous man, but I believe he is above any littleness, and whatever injustice is done me, and it is idle to deny that my position is a very unjust one, I believe is not intentional on his part, but arises from the force of circumstances, and from that weakness inherent in human nature which compels a man to look to his own interests.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, May 24, 9 A. M., 1864.

We have manœuvered the enemy away from their strong position on the Po, near Spottsylvania Court House, and now have compelled them to fall back from the North Anna River, which they tried to hold. Yesterday Warren and Hancock both had engagements with them, and were successful. We undoubtedly have the *morale* over them, and will eventually, I think, compel them to go into Richmond; after that, *nous verrons*.

I am writing this letter in the House of God, used for general headquarters. What a scene and commentary on the times!¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 9 A. M., May 25, 1864.

Yours of the 21st reached me this morning, also one from your mother to the same effect, that it was too late to refuse the house. Setting aside the injustice to me of placing the affair in such condi-

¹ Battle of North Anna. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—May 22-31, 1864—1,607 (O. R.).

tion that I have no option in the matter, I have written a letter to Mr. Gerhard, which I enclose, and which you can hand to him at such time as may be deemed suitable. My contributing friends must know there was nothing personal in my action, because I do not know the name of a single contributor. I acted on the general principle I have always held, that a public man makes a mistake when he allows his generous friends to reward him with gifts. I wrote Mr. Gerhard it was not a case of necessity, as, by proper economy, we could and should live on our means; that if anything should happen to me, then I would be grateful for the smallest assistance given to you and the children; but until that time, I thought it better for me to preserve my independence, although no one could be more sensible to and grateful for the generous kindness of my friends than I was. My opinions are still unchanged; but if the affair is settled, and it is too late to decline, I have no disposition to be ungenerous, and certainly no design of doing anything that would be offensive to the feelings of those who have been so kind to me. You can therefore take the house, and express to all you know my deep obligation and sincere gratitude.

The enemy, though he has fallen back, still confronts us, and is being reinforced.

SOUTH SIDE OF PAMUNKEY RIVER, HANOVERTOWN,
HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 10 A. M., *May 29, 1864.*

We have crossed the Pamunkey, and are now within eighteen miles of Richmond. Lee has fallen back from the North Anna, and is somewhere between us and Richmond. We shall move forward to-day to feel for him. We are getting on very well, and I am in hopes will continue to manoeuvre till we compel Lee to retire into the defense of Richmond, when the grand decisive fight will come off, which I trust will bring the war to a close, and that it will be victory for us.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *May 30, 1864.*

We are within sixteen miles of Richmond, working our way along slowly but surely. I expect we shall be a long while getting in, but I trust through the blessing of God we will at last succeed, and if we do, I think, from the tone of the Southern press, and the talk of the prisoners, that they will be sensible enough to give it up. They are now fighting cautiously, but desperately, disputing every inch of ground, but confining themselves exclusively to the defensive.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 6 P. M., *June 1, 1864.*

We are pegging away here, and gradually getting nearer and nearer to Richmond, although its capture is yet far off. Our advance is within two miles of Mechanicsville, which, if you remember, is the place where the fighting commenced in the Seven Days. The rebs keep taking up strong positions and entrenching themselves. This compels us to move around their flank, after trying to find some weak point to attack. This operation has now occurred four times, namely, crossing the Rapidan, at Old Wilderness, at Spottsylvania Court House, and recently at North Anna. We shall have to do it once more before we get them into their defenses at Richmond, and then will begin the tedious process of a quasi-siege, like that at Sebastopol; which will last as long, unless we can get hold of their railroads and cut off their supplies, when they must come out and fight.

Whilst I am writing the cannon and musketry are rattling all along our lines, over five miles in extent, but we have become so accustomed to these sounds that we hardly notice them.

The weather is beginning to be hot, but I keep in the saddle during the day, and sleep soundly at night.

The papers are giving Grant all the credit of what they call successes; I hope they will remember this if anything goes wrong.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 8 A. M., *June 4, 1864.*

I have only time to write you that we had a big battle yesterday, on the field of the old Gaines's Mill battle-ground, with the positions of the contending forces reversed. The battle ended without any decided results, we repulsing all attacks of the enemy and they doing the same; losses estimated about equal on both sides; ours roughly estimated at seven thousand five hundred in all.¹

I had immediate and entire command on the field all day, the Lieutenant General honoring the field with his presence only about one hour in the middle of the day. The papers will, however, undoubtedly inform you of all his doings, and I will therefore confine myself to mine.

George², myself, and all your friends, are well and unhurt. The enemy, as usual, were strongly fortified, and we have pretty well

¹ Battle of Cold Harbor. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—June 2-10, 1864—13,153 (O. R.).

² Son of General Meade.

entrenched ourselves. How long this game is to be played it is impossible to tell; but in the long run, we ought to succeed, because it is in our power more promptly to fill the gaps in men and material which this constant fighting produces.

Baldy Smith's corps has joined, and he is placed under my orders.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 9 P. M., *June 5, 1864.*

Since our last battle on the 3d inst. we have been comparatively quiet. The enemy has tried his hand once or twice at the offensive, and in each case has been repulsed and severely punished. This evening, after dark, he made a furious attack, but was everywhere repulsed. The sound of the artillery and musketry has just died away. Indeed, we are pretty much engaged all the time, from early in the morning till late at night. I don't believe the military history of the world can afford a parallel to the protracted and severe fighting which this army has sustained for the last thirty days. You would suppose, with all this severe fighting, our severe losses, constant marches, many in the night, that the physical powers of the men would be exhausted. I have no doubt in time it will tell on them, but as yet they show no evidences of it.

I feel a satisfaction in knowing that my record is clear, and that the results of this campaign are the clearest indications I could wish of my sound judgment, both at Williamsport and Mine Run. In every instance that we have attacked the enemy in an entrenched position we have failed, except in the case of Hancock's attack at Spottsylvania, which was a surprise discreditable to the enemy. So, likewise, whenever the enemy has attacked us in position, he has been repulsed. I think Grant has had his eyes opened, and is willing to admit now that Virginia and Lee's army is not Tennessee and Bragg's army. Whether the people will ever realize this fact remains to be seen.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 6, 1864.*

Do not be deceived about the situation of affairs by the foolish despatches in the papers. Be not over-elated by reported successes, nor over-depressed by exaggerated rumors of failures. Up to this time our success has consisted only in compelling the enemy to draw in towards Richmond; our failure has been that we have not been able to overcome, destroy or bag his army.

His success has been in preventing us from doing the above, and

in heading us off every time we have tried to get around him. In the meantime, both sides have suffered great losses, probably proportionate to our original relative strength, and it is highly probable that both sides have repaired their losses by reinforcements, so that we stand now in the same relative proportion, three to two, with original numbers. The great struggle has yet to come off in the vicinity of Richmond. The enemy have the advantages of position, fortifications, and being concentrated at their centre. We shall have to move slowly and cautiously, but I am in hopes, with reasonable luck, we will be able to succeed.

I am sorry, very sorry, to hear what you write of Sergeant,¹ but God's will must be done, and we must be resigned.

I am trying to collect some trophies from our recent battle-fields to send you for your fair.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 9 P. M., June 9, 1864.

I fully enter into all your feelings of annoyance at the manner in which I have been treated, but I do not see that I can do anything but bear patiently till it pleases God to let the truth be known and matters set right. I have noticed what you say about the *Inquirer*, but, as you observe, it is no worse than the other papers. Even Coppée, in the June number of his magazine, shows he, too, is demoralized, he having a flaming editorial notice of the wonderful genius of Grant. Now, to tell the truth, the latter has greatly disappointed me, and since this campaign I really begin to think I am something of a general.

I don't know whether you saw an article in the *Inquirer* of the 2d inst. on me, which the writer intended to be very complimentary.² At the close of it he refers to an eventful occasion when Grant saved the life of the nation, when I desired to destroy it. I could not make out what in the world this meant; but fortunately I found the author, one Edward Cropsey, and having sent for him, he explained that he had heard that on the night of the second day's battle of the Wilderness I had urged on General Grant the withdrawal of the army across the Rapidan, but Grant had firmly resisted all my intercessions, and thus the country was saved the disgrace of a retreat. I asked his authority; he said it was the talk of the camp. I told him it was a base and wicked lie, and that I would make an example

¹ Ill health of son of General Meade.

² For article mentioned, see Appendix P.

of him, which should not only serve to deter others from committing like offenses, but would give publicity to his lie and the truth. I accordingly issued an order denouncing the falsehood, and ordering the offender to be paraded through the lines of the army with a placard bearing the inscription, "Libeler of the Press," and then that he should be put beyond the lines and not allowed to return. This sentence was duly executed, much to the delight of the whole army, for the race of newspaper correspondents is universally despised by the soldiers.

General Grant happened to be present when I was making out the order, and fully approved of it, although he said he knew the offender, and that his family was a respectable one in Illinois. After the man had been turned out and the affair had become public, then I learned to my surprise that this malicious falsehood had been circulated all over the country.

We find Lee's position again too strong for us, and will have to make another movement, the particulars of which I cannot disclose.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 12, 1864.*

In my last letter I gave you an account of a wicked and malicious falsehood which I found had been extensively circulated all through the North, and the first intimation of which was a reference to it in the *Inquirer* of the 2d inst. Since writing, I have received the enclosed message from the Secretary of War, to which I sent the accompanying note. I do not remember whether I ever told you that we were honored with the presence of Mr. Dana, the Assistant Secretary of War, who accompanies this army, as a kind of staff officer of the Secretary, and who keeps the Secretary advised by daily telegrams of the progress and condition of affairs. It is from Mr. Dana's telegrams that Mr. Stanton's despatches to General Dix are made up. This I learned accidentally, yesterday, in a conversation with Grant, in which I commented on some of Mr. Stanton's despatches. Grant agreed fully with me in my views, and then told me he had never sent a despatch to Mr. Stanton since crossing the Rapidan, the few despatches he had sent being directed to General Halleck. I was glad to hear this, because it removed from my mind a prejudice I had imbibed, on the supposition that Mr. Stanton was quoting Grant, and arising from the fact I have mentioned, that in all Mr. Stanton's despatches from Grant's headquarters my name was never alluded to; for which I had held Grant responsible, without cause.

I believe I have saved you some annoyance by informing an officer, who applied to me in the name of Mrs. Judge Daly, of New York, to know if you would not unite in the great woman's movement about dress, that, practically, you had been engaged in that movement ever since your marriage, and that at present your domestic duties were, from your large family, so absorbing, you really had no time to devote to public matters, even as important as the great woman's movement.

To-day we commence a flank march, to unite with Butler¹ on the James. If it is successful, as I think it will be, it will bring us to the last act of the Richmond drama, which I trust will have but few scenes in it, and will end fortunately and victoriously for us.

Both George² and myself are quite well, though the heat, hard service, bad water, and swampy regions are beginning to tell on the health of the army.

I send you an excellent picture of Sedgwick.

FIELD OF BATTLE NEAR PETERSBURG,
HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY CORPS, 12 M., *June 17, 1864.*

I have not written you for several days, as we have been moving, our mail facilities for the time being interrupted. Our march from Cold Harbor to this place has been most successful, including, as it has done, the crossing of two streams, the Chickahominy and the James, over the former of which a bridge of one thousand seven hundred feet had to be thrown, and over the James one of two thousand feet, in eighty-five feet of water—an exploit in military bridge building that has never been equaled. I reached this field yesterday, having been placed by General Grant in command of all the troops in front of Petersburg, consisting of the Army of the Potomac, and two portions of Butler's army, Grant being back at City Point. After arriving on the ground, although our men had been marching all the night before and during the day, I at once ordered an attack, which commenced at 6 P. M. and lasted pretty much continuously till 4 A. M. to-day—that is, ten hours—eight of which was by moonlight, another unparalleled feat in the annals of war.

Our attack was quite successful, as we captured several of their works, four guns and five hundred prisoners. The first prisoners brought in replied, on being asked to what command they belonged,

¹ General Benjamin F. Butler, commanding the Army of the James.

² Son of General Meade.

Wise's¹ Legion. I asked where the general was; they said right in my front. I asked how he was, and they replied, the old man seemed quite well. I inquired what members of his family were with him, and they replied, he had two aides, named Wise, one of whom was his son and the other a nephew. This is the latest intelligence I can send you from your Virginia connections.

We find the enemy, as usual, in a very strong position, defended by earthworks, and it looks very much as if we will have to go through a siege of Petersburg before entering on the siege of Richmond, and that Grant's words of keeping at it all summer will prove to be quite prophetic. Well, it is all in the cruise, as the sailors say.

I have to-day received your letters of the 10th and 12th. Hancock was with me when I read them. Hancock and I have great fun over the sword contest at the fair, I telling him that he made use of his time last winter to make friends with the "Shoddy," and of course, as they have the money, I can't expect to compete with him. We laugh and joke a good deal about it, and whenever a paper comes in we look for the state of the vote. The last date we have is the 14th, and that shows me about one hundred and fifty ahead, which, as I have been behind him all the time, is the source of much merriment.

Your account of the fair is very interesting. I should think, from the newspapers, you would be likely to beat the New York fair in receipts, and that your expenses would be much less.

I wish Sargie² would get well enough to travel; he might pay me a visit, now the weather is warm. I don't suppose Sargie cares much about seeing war, but I and George² would like hugely to see him. The weather is getting quite warm. I continue in excellent health and spirits.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 21, 1864.*

My last letter was written on the 17th, during the battle of Petersburg, which lasted off and on from 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 16th to dark of the 18th, day and night, during which time we drove the enemy more than a mile and a half, taking from them two strong lines of works, capturing over twenty guns, four colors and nearly seven hundred prisoners. In all this fighting and these operations I had exclusive command, Grant being all the time at City Point, and

¹ General Henry A. Wise, brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

² Son of General Meade.

coming on the field for only half an hour on the 17th, and yet in Mr. Stanton's official despatch he quotes General Grant's account, and my name is not even mentioned. I cannot imagine why I am thus ignored.¹

I think I wrote you on the 17th that I was fighting Mr. Wise. Since then I have seen a Petersburg paper, announcing the wounding severely of George D. Wise, his nephew and aide, also of Peyton Wise, another nephew and aide-de-camp.

On the 18th we found the enemy had retired to an inner line, which I had reason to believe was not strongly fortified. I followed them and immediately attacked them with my whole force, but could not break through their lines. Our losses in the three-days' fight under my command amount to nine thousand five hundred, killed, wounded and missing. As I did not have over sixty thousand men, this loss is severe, and shows how hard the fighting was.

Your accounts of the fair are quite amusing. Hancock and myself have much fun over the sword contest, and are both quite sorry to see we stand no chance for the five thousand dollar vase.

Mr. Lincoln honored the army with his presence this afternoon, and was so gracious as to say he had seen you in Philadelphia, etc., etc.

We have been very quiet for two days, having given up the idea of taking Petersburg by assault. Indeed, the army is exhausted with forty-nine days of continued marching and fighting, and absolutely requires rest to prevent its *morale* being impaired.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, June 24, 1864.

Our operations here for the last few days, though not so heavy as prior to the 18th, have still been very active. We have been extending our lines around Petersburg, and have encountered considerable opposition from the enemy, which has somewhat checked the rapidity of our progress.

I am sorry to see the feeling you report as existing with certain persons. Despondency is never going to get us through this war, and although this army has not accomplished all that ignorant people anticipated, it has really done more than could reasonably have been counted on. Our losses, it is true, have been large, but not larger than is incidental to operations of the character of ours, being offen-

¹ Cold Harbor to Petersburg, June 11-20, 1864. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—9,665 (O. R.).

sive, and conducted on so grand a scale, with such numbers. Fifty days' constant marching and fighting has undoubtedly had its influence on the army, and its condition is not what it was when we first crossed the Rapidan.

On the 18th I assaulted several times the enemy's positions, deliberately, and with the expectation of carrying them, because I had positive information the enemy had not occupied them more than twelve hours, and that no digging had been done on the lines prior to their occupation. Nevertheless, I failed, and met with serious loss, principally owing to the moral condition of the army; for I am satisfied, had these assaults been made on the 5th and 6th of May, we should have succeeded with half the loss we met.

Another inconvenience we suffer from is in the loss of superior and other officers. Hancock's Corps has lost twenty brigade commanders, and the rest of the army is similarly situated. We cannot replace the officers lost with experienced men, and there is no time for reorganization or careful selection. At the same time you must remember the enemy labors under like disadvantages. I conversed with some prisoners yesterday, who said they were completely exhausted, having had no rest or sleep for days, and being compelled to be all the time marching. I said to one of them, "Well, we will treat you well," and he replied, "Oh, sir, you cannot treat us worse than we are treated on the other side." In flags of truce, and on all occasions that we meet the rebel officers, they always begin conversation by asking when the war is going to be over, and expressing themselves as most heartily tired and anxious for peace. I believe these two armies would fraternize and make peace in an hour, if the matter rested with them; not on terms to suit politicians on either side, but such as the world at large would acknowledge as honorable, and which would be satisfactory to the mass of people on both sides. But while I ardently desire peace, and think a settlement not impracticable, I am opposed to any cessation of our efforts so long as the war has to be continued, and I regret to see symptoms of a discontent which, if persisted in, must paralyze our cause. Again, it is impossible for me personally to avoid my share of the odium, if any is to be cast on this army. I complain, and I think justly, that the press and the Government despatches fail to acknowledge my services, but I cannot reasonably do this, and expect to be shielded from complaints, if any are made of the operations.

You know I have never shut my eyes to the obstacles we have

to encounter, and have always appreciated the difficulties to be overcome. The campaign, thus far, has been pretty much what I expected; if anything, rather greater obstacles than I anticipated. I still believe, with the liberal supply of men and means which our superior resources ought to furnish, we will win in the long run; but it is a question of tenacity and nerve, and it won't do to look behind, or to calculate the cost in blood and treasure; if we do we are lost and our enemies succeed. You may remember I told the good people of Philadelphia, that what we wanted was men, fighting men; that the war could only be closed by desperate and bloody fighting; and the sooner the people realize this, and give evidence of their appreciation by coming forward to fight, the better.

I am well and seem to improve on hard work. I have had only three hours' sleep for several nights past.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 25, 1864.*

We have had for ten days past most intensely hot weather, and in consequence have desisted from carrying on any more active operations than were absolutely necessary. Grant being at City Point, some eight miles distant, I see but little of him. He paid me a visit of an hour or two day before yesterday.

I received a few days ago a very kind letter from Cortlandt Parker, expressing much consideration for me in my present position, and saying it was well known how much of the work I was doing, and how little of the credit I was getting. Among other matters he alluded to the Cropsey affair, and said he was at George Harding's when his brother came in with the news. Both the Hardings, he said, were quite excited, George the less so of the two; and Cortlandt thought he convinced him I was right, and advised me to write to him to endeavor to smooth it over. This I do not see how I can very well do, because I got Markoe Bache to write to him when the affair occurred, and to send him Cropsey's confession, which he made, hoping by its publication in the *Inquirer* to get off. I asked Markoe to tell Mr. Harding that, as I could not let Cropsey off, he was at liberty to do as he pleased about the letter, though in my judgment the cause of truth and justice demanded its publication. The letter was never published, and the public are to this day ignorant of the real character of Cropsey's offense.

Hancock's wound discharged a big piece of bone the other day, and since then he has rapidly improved, and expects in a day

or two to return to duty. In the meantime Birney has done very well.

Gibbon, whom I suppose you know I have finally succeeded in getting promoted, has been under the weather, but was about to-day.

*To John Sergeant Meade:*¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, June 27, 1864.

Should I get the Philadelphia Fair sword, and the one from the City Councils, I think I shall be well off for weapons to wield in my country's cause.

Hancock and myself are anxiously awaiting the decision in the great sword case, he having hopes some one will come down at the last moment in a sealed envelope with a clincher.

The weather has been so intensely hot, dry and dusty, that both sides were compelled to cease for awhile the pleasant task of sending people to eternity, which for the last fifty days we have been so successfully pursuing. The rest was much needed by both armies, and has been particularly enjoyed by myself.

I have now as guests two French officers sent by the Emperor, to see all they can; one of them, Colonel de Chenal, married a relative of the Hopkinsons. They are both intelligent gentlemen, and their visit has been very pleasant and agreeable.

I can hardly tell you what we are going to do next, whether to lay siege to Petersburg or something else; a few days I suppose will tell.

George² continues quite well; Jim Biddle, Cadwalader³ and all the rest are in fine health and spirits.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, June 30, 1864.

I am sorry to tell you we have had quite a serious disaster. A whole division of cavalry, which was sent about a week ago to destroy the roads out of Petersburg, after accomplishing their work, were met on their return by three divisions of the enemy's cavalry, supported by infantry, and after an honorable struggle were overpowered and dispersed. A large number have gotten in, but the greater portion

¹ Son of General Meade.

² Charles E. Cadwalader.

³ Son of General Meade.

are as yet missing, and I fear are in the hands of the enemy. I feel justified in telling you, *though it is in the strictest confidence*, that the sending this command was against my judgment, as I anticipated just this result, and I desired to wait till we could concentrate our cavalry before making an attempt to cut the enemy's communications, but I was overruled. Now the result is, that our cavalry is no longer superior in numbers to the enemy, and, what is worse, has lost its prestige.

These ups and downs in war are to be expected, and perhaps are intended to prevent over-exultation and its consequences.

I cannot imagine where the report originated that this army was to be withdrawn, or on what grounds it was predicted. Such an act would be suicidal and could only result in the triumph of the enemy. No one here has ever dreamed of such a thing, though there may be different opinions as to the precise period when Richmond will fall.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 3, 1864.*

We are not doing much at present; the great heat and the dust, together with the exhausted condition of the men, imposed a quiet on us which the enemy does not seem disposed to disturb.

To-day is the anniversary of the last day's fight at Gettysburg. As I reflect on that eventful period, and all that has elapsed since, I have reason to be satisfied with my course, and cause to be most thankful. The longer this war continues the more will Gettysburg and its results be appreciated. Colonel de Chenal, who is still with me, says he studied the battle, with maps at Pau, but had no idea that on its anniversary he should be the guest of the victorious commander. He says in Europe it was looked on as a great battle.

It is said Washington is very unhealthy, and that many of our wounded are dying there. It is strange; the health of the army never was better—we have no sickness at all. But if we are kept here, I presume, as the summer advances, we must expect considerable sickness.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 7, 1864.*

I am glad to hear the good news about Baldy, as I am very much attached to the old brute.

Matters seem to be at a standstill for the present, and will continue so until the arrival of expected reinforcements. I see a tendency to despondency in some of the public journals. This arises

from the folly of expecting one man to perform miracles, and then being depressed because unreasonable anticipations are not realized. Things have occurred very much as I expected. I had hoped for better success at the beginning, but after we failed to defeat Lee at the Wilderness, I took it for granted we should have to manœuvre him into the fortifications of Richmond, and then lay siege to that place. I knew this, with the men we had, would be a formidable undertaking, requiring time and patience, and the final result depending very much upon the support we obtained from the Government and people in the way of reinforcements. I always knew the enemy would fight desperately, and would be skillfully handled. I still think, if the men are furnished promptly, that we shall eventually succeed in overcoming Lee's army, and when that is done the Rebellion is over.

I presume you will all be excited again in Philadelphia at the appearance of the rebel army in Maryland and Pennsylvania. If it stirs the people up to turning out and volunteering, I shall thank Mr. Ewell very much, even if he does rob and steal some. The apathy of our people is our stumbling block. This move of Lee's is an ingenious effort to get Grant to send troops from here, but I think he will be disappointed.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 12, 1864.*

I received to-night your letter of the 10th, and am glad to see you are not excited about the rebel invasion. This is a bold stroke of Lee's to endeavor to procure the withdrawal of this army from its menacing attitude, and to prevent the sending of reinforcements to Grant. The manœuvre thus far has been successful, as not only has the Sixth Corps been sent away, but the Nineteenth Corps (twenty thousand strong), which was to reinforce us, has been diverted to Washington. This loss of strength will practically prevent our doing anything in the way of offensive movements until the campaign in Maryland is settled and the rebels so crippled as to quiet all apprehensions of their return. I understand Ord has been sent to Baltimore to command, in place of Wallace, defeated, and that Howe has been sent to supersede Sigel. Augur is in Washington, and Hunter coming from Cumberland. The danger is that with so many commanders, independent of each other (I ought to have mentioned Couch also), and their forces so scattered, that the rebs will have it all their own way to commit depredations and collect supplies, and

when our troops leave the places they are now guarding, and attempt the offensive, that before they can concentrate, the rebels will fall upon some portion and whip them in detail. I consider the situation as critical; not that I believe the enemy can effect anything permanent, but I fear they will so embarrass and check our operations as to paralyze our efforts and prolong the period when we can collect enough troops here to do the work before us.

Hancock told me to-day he had been confidentially informed it was intended to remove me from command, and that he was to be my successor. He would not give me his authority, but said it was reliable. He did not know the grounds on which this action was to be based. This seemed to me so preposterous that I could not help laughing, but Hancock assured me it was undoubtedly in agitation, and thought I ought to be warned. He said, from what he could gather, he thought that Grant opposed it, but that he would be overruled. Hancock thought I would not be relieved entirely, but would be ordered somewhere, perhaps to Pennsylvania. Now, as my conscience is clear that I have done my duty to the best of my ability since this campaign commenced, and as I feel I have been unjustly treated, and have not had the credit I was and am entitled to, I shall not worry myself about any such outrage as being relieved without cause. I mention all this confidentially to you, simply as a preparation for the coming event, should it take place.

There have been recently with the army several Senators and Representatives; among others, Chandler and Wilkinson of Minnesota. The latter individual was at General Crawford's. He was very severe on me, showing he still retained the animus that dictated his attack on me in the Senate last winter.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 15, 1864.*

I suppose you are in a great state of excitement on account of the rebel invasion. I wrote you in my last that I thought it was a serious affair, and subsequent developments prove it to be so. Day before yesterday I went down to City Point to see General Grant, having heard a rumor that I was to be sent to Washington. I found Grant quite serious, but calm. He seemed to think that with the Sixth Corps from this army, and the Nineteenth from Louisiana, there would be troops enough, with Hunter's, Couch's and Augur's commands, not only to defeat the rebels, but to bag them. He said he had not contemplated sending me to Washington, but if another

corps had to go, he would send me with it. I do not think the position a desirable one, as the difficulty will be to get the various commands together and harmonize such conflicting elements. If, however, I am ordered, I will do the best I can. I think Grant should either have gone himself or sent me earlier. He has given the supreme command to Wright, who is an excellent officer. I expect that after the rebels find Washington too strong for them, and they have done all the plundering they can, they will quietly slip across the Potomac and rush down here to reinforce Lee, who will then try to throw himself on us before our troops can get back.

I spoke to Grant about the report that I was to be relieved, and he said he had never heard a word of it, and did not believe there was any foundation for it, as he would most certainly have been consulted. I have therefore dismissed the matter as some idle talk from some person with whom the wish was father to the thought.

Lee has not sent away any of his army, and is doubtless disappointed that his diversion has not produced a greater weakening of Grant's army. He confidently expected to transfer the seat of war to Maryland, and thought his menace of Washington would induce the Government to order Grant back there with his army.

I was very sorry to hear of Franklin's capture, for his health is not good, owing to a wound he received in Louisiana, and I fear, if they send him to Charleston, his health may give way under the confinement in that climate, or be permanently injured.

Whilst I was writing we have a telegram reporting the withdrawal of the enemy across the Potomac, Wright in pursuit. Just as I expected. It also states there is a rumor that Franklin has made his escape, which I earnestly hope may prove true.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 17, 1864.*

I had a visit to-day from General Grant, who was the first to tell me of the attack in the *Times*, based on my order expelling two correspondents. Grant expressed himself very much annoyed at the injustice done me, which he said was glaring, because my order distinctly states that it was by his direction these men were prohibited remaining with the army. He acknowledged there was an evident intention to hold me accountable for all that was condemned, and to praise him for all that was considered commendable.

As to these two correspondents, the facts are, that Grant sent me an order to send Swinton, of the *Times*, out of the lines of my army.

Swinton was in Washington, and he was accordingly notified not to return. In regard to the other, Kent, of the *Tribune*, Hancock wrote me an official letter, enclosing the *Tribune*, and complaining of the misstatements of Kent. As Kent was a correspondent with General Butler's command, and not under my jurisdiction, I simply forwarded Hancock's letter to General Grant, asking that proper action should be taken in the case. He replied that, on reference to General Butler, it was found Kent had gone off, but that he, Grant, had prohibited his return. I therefore issued my order, stating these men were by General Grant's directions excluded from the army, and directing, if they returned, they should be arrested and turned over to the Provost Marshal General. They might just as well attack General Patrick, the Provost Marshal, because he is ordered to execute the order, as to attack me, who merely gave publicity to General Grant's order.

We are quite on the *qui-vive* to-night, from the reports of deserters, who say we are to be attacked to-morrow. Their story is that Johnston is so pressed by Sherman,¹ that if he is not reinforced, he will have to succumb, and that he cannot be reinforced until we are driven back. We consider this great news, and are most anxiously and impatiently awaiting the attack, feeling confident we can whip twice our numbers if they have the hardihood to attack us.

Franklin's escape has delighted every one, and we all hope his luck has now turned.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 10 P. M., July 20, 1864.

I am a good deal amused at your fear that I will become entangled with politicians. You may make your mind easy on that point, as, with the exception of what you write, I have never heard a word breathed on the subject. I rather fancy I should be considered too independent and too intractable for the purposes of any of these gentlemen.

Much excitement was created to-day by the announcement that General W. F. Smith, who returned last evening from his sick leave, was this morning relieved from his command of the Eighteenth Corps and ordered to New York. It was only the other day he was assigned by the President to this command, and Butler sent to Fortress Monroe. It appears now the tables are turned—Butler remains and Smith goes.

¹ Major-General W. T. Sherman advancing on Atlanta, Ga.

We have had a little rain, which has added greatly to our comfort and allayed somewhat the dust which has been such an annoyance. We are waiting the return of the Sixth Corps, sent to relieve Washington, after which I suppose we shall begin anew.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, July 23, 1864.

The stories you hear about me, some of which have reached camp, are mere *canards*. I have never had any quarrel with either General Hancock or Smith. Hancock is an honest man, and as he always professes the warmest friendship for me, I never doubt his statements; and I am sure I have for him the most friendly feeling and the highest appreciation of his talents. I am perfectly willing at any time to turn over to him the Army of the Potomac, and wish him joy of his promotion.

We have been very quiet since I last wrote; there are signs of approaching activity. The army is getting to be quite satisfied with its rest, and ready to try it again.

It would appear from the news from Niagara Falls that the question of peace has been in a measure mooted. The army would hail an honorable peace with delight, and I do believe, if the question was left to those who do the fighting, an honorable peace would be made in a few hours.

Ord has been placed in Smith's place in command of the Eighteenth Corps, and General Birney has been assigned to the Tenth Corps, largely composed of colored troops.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, July 26, 1864.

I consider the peace movement in Canada, and the share Horace Greeley had in it, as most significant. The New York *Times* of the 23d has a most important article on the President's "To whom it may concern" proclamation, in which it is argued that Mr. Lincoln was right to make the integrity of the Union a *sine qua non*, but not to make the abandonment of slavery; that this last is a question for discussion and mutual arrangement, and should not be interposed as a bar to peace negotiations.

It is a pity Mr. Lincoln employed the term "abandonment of slavery," as it implies its immediate abolition or extinction, to which the South will never agree; at least, not until our military successes have been greater than they have hitherto been, or than they now seem likely to be. Whereas had he said the *final adjustment* of the

slavery question, leaving the door open to gradual emancipation, I really believe the South would listen and agree to terms. But when a man like Horace Greeley declares a peace is not so distant or improbable as he had thought, and when a Republican paper, like the *Times*, asserts the people are yearning for peace, and will not permit the slavery question to interpose towards its negotiations, I think we may conclude we see the beginning of the end. God grant it may be so, and that it will not be long before this terrible war is brought to a close.

The camp is full of rumors of intrigues and reports of all kinds, but I keep myself free from them all, ask no questions, mind my own business, and stand prepared to obey orders and do my duty.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 29, 1864.*

Your letters of the 24th and 27th arrived this evening. They are written in very bad spirits, and I am tempted to scold you for indulging in such. I want you to recover your original elasticity of spirits which characterized you in the early days of our married life, when you were always sure something was going to turn up. You must now try to look on the bright side and hope for the best. I think we have a great deal to be thankful for, and things might be much worse.

I had a visit yesterday from our old friend the Rev. Mr. Neill. He was very complimentary to me, and promised to call and see you on his return to Philadelphia. He was here as agent of the Christian Commission.

Yesterday I went to see General Grant at City Point. He said he wanted an officer to go to Washington to take command of the Department of West Virginia, Susquehanna, Baltimore and Washington. That not wishing to take any one from the field, he had suggested Franklin, but they had declined to have Franklin. He then suggested my name, to which he had received no reply, but a message from the President asking him to meet him at Fortress Monroe. I made no reply to Grant, except to say I was ready to obey any order that might be given me. So far as having an independent command, which the Army of the Potomac is not, I would like this change very well; but in other respects, to have to manage Couch, Hunter, Wallace and Augur, and to be managed by the President, Secretary and Halleck, will be a pretty trying position that no man in his senses could desire. I am quite indifferent how

it turns out. I think the President will urge the appointment of Halleck; but Grant will not agree to this if he can help it.

Grant told me Sherman has assigned Howard to McPherson's command.¹ This had disgusted Joe Hooker, who had asked to be and had been relieved. To-morrow we make an attack on Petersburg. I am not sanguine of success, but hope for the best.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 31, 1864.*

Our attack yesterday, although made under the most advantageous circumstances, was a failure. By a movement to the north bank of the James, Lee was completely deceived, and thinking it was a movement of the whole army against Richmond, he rushed over there with the greater portion of his army, leaving his works in our front held by only three out of the eight divisions of his army. When this was ascertained, it was determined to spring a mine which had been dug under one of the enemy's batteries on their line, assault the breach, and push the whole army through to the Appomattox River. The mine had been dug by a Pennsylvania regiment of coal miners in Burnside's Corps, and to this officer was entrusted the assault. At 5 A. M. yesterday the mine was most successfully exploded, throwing into the air, and subsequently burying, four guns and a South Carolina regiment. Our column immediately took possession of the crater and the adjacent part of the enemy's first line; but instead of immediately pushing on and crowning the hill in front, which was the key to the whole of the enemy's position, our men crouched in the crater and could not be got forward. Burnside and myself had a dispute, he not being willing to admit his men would not advance; at the same time it was evident to all no progress was being made. In this manner, after a delay of five hours, finding it impossible to get an advance, the thing was given up and Burnside ordered to withdraw. In the meantime the enemy, seeing we did not come forward, rallied, and massing on the point held by our troops, drove them back, with confusion and the loss of a number of prisoners.²

The affair was very badly managed by Burnside, and has produced a great deal of irritation and bad feeling, and I have applied

¹ Army of the Cumberland.

² Siege and assaults of Petersburg, June 21-July 29, 1864. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—5,316 (O. R.). Battle of July 30, 1864 (explosion of mine). Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—4,008 (O. R.).

to have him relieved. In one of my despatches I asked if the difficulty was the refusal of his officers and men to obey his orders to advance, and I said I wanted to know the truth, and to have an immediate answer. This he chose to construe into an imputation on his veracity, and replied that the charge on my part was un-officer-like and ungentlemanly. Of course this has brought matters to a focus, and either he or I has got to go. It was a real misfortune, because we can hardly expect again to have such a good chance, and a failure at this time is most unfortunate. Grant was on the field with me all the time, and assented to all I did. I am afraid our failure will have a most unfavorable influence on the public mind, prone as it is to despondency. I was not much in favor of the plan, but it being determined on, I wanted to try everything for success.

Grant went last night to see the President. What the result will be I cannot tell; but what with the re-advance of the enemy into Pennsylvania, and the failure to accomplish anything here, matters are becoming complicated.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 3, 1864.*

I am in the midst of my row with Burnside. Our recent miserable failure will require an investigation, and authority has been asked of the President to appoint a court of inquiry. In the meantime I have preferred charges against Burnside, and asked he be relieved from duty with this army.

Yesterday, on General Grant's return from Old Point, General Sheridan was ordered to Washington, to command that portion of the Army of the Potomac now detached for the defense of Maryland and the Capital. I at once went to Grant and told him, as he had thought proper to communicate to me that he had nominated me for a command in Washington, I demanded to know the reason I had not been accepted. He said the President expressed every willingness to have me, but not knowing my wishes on the subject, he feared my removal from the command of the Army of the Potomac might be misunderstood by the public and be construed into a disapprobation of my course, but if I desired the transfer, he would be very glad to have it made. General Grant said it was then concluded I should be sent, if any more troops should be detached; in the meantime, Sheridan was sent to command Wright's Corps and the division of cavalry already sent. I am a little doubtful about this matter. I believe Grant is honest and would not deceive me,

but I think there is something more than is acknowledged. However, as I am indifferent about the position, I am content, so long as finding any fault with me is disclaimed. Hancock, whose name was also mentioned, is quite put out, and thinks some political chicanery at the bottom of it, and that they are afraid in Washington to give us a chance to do anything that others cannot swallow up. I, however, am more charitable; at any rate, I intend to look on the affair in the most favorable light, particularly as I have got my hands full with the Burnside imbroglio, and must remain here to see to it.

August 6, 1864.

Grant has not yet returned from Washington; no telegrams have been received from him since he left, so I presume the project of sending me to take command has fallen through. I feel quite easy and indifferent to what course they may think proper to take. My conscience is clear. I have done my duty to the best of my ability, and shall continue to do so, regardless of newspaper abuse, and without any effort at reply thereto.

A court of inquiry, at my request, has been appointed, with Hancock as President. The whole affair of the 30th will be ventilated.

I had to-day a visit from Mr. Sam. Wilkeson, one of the editors of the *Tribune*, and one of my most bitter villifiers last spring. This individual called to make the *amende honorable*—to say he had been deceived, and to express the most friendly feelings for me. As I had never seen him before, but once on the field of Gettysburg, and had never exchanged a word with him, or given him any cause of offense, I received his apologies as if nothing had ever taken place, and he left me quite pleased.

I hope the dear children will enjoy themselves at Cape May. I should be so happy if I could only be there with you, to indulge in those splendid sea baths and take our old walks on the beach. Well, let us keep up our spirits, have brave hearts, trust in God's mercy and goodness, and believe that so long as we try to do our duty all will be well in time.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, August 8, 1864.

Grant has not yet returned from Washington. It is reported he has gone to Harper's Ferry to see for himself how matters stand. This, and his not telegraphing for me, I think settle the question about my being transferred.

August 9, 1864.

I am delighted to see your letter is written in such good spirits, and am truly rejoiced to hear I have so many and such warm friends. The attempt to implicate me in the recent fiasco was truly ridiculous; still, the public must in time be influenced by these repeated and constant attacks, however untrue and unjustifiable they may be. Have you ever thought that since the first week after Gettysburg, now more than a year, I have never been alluded to in public journals except to abuse and villify me? And why this is I have never been able to imagine.

I had a letter to-night from Cortlandt Parker, who has recently seen George Harding. He says Harding told him he had recently seen Stanton, who is an enthusiastic admirer of Grant, and that Stanton observed that Grant had a most exalted opinion of me, and told him, Stanton, that when he first came East he thought Sherman was the first soldier in the country, but now he believed I was his equal, if not superior. I send you this for what it is worth. I certainly think Grant has a queer way of showing his appreciation. Grant has not until recently seen Stanton, since we crossed the Rappahannock, so could not have told him this; but Dana may have conveyed this information.

There was an awful explosion to-day at City Point of a powder and ammunition vessel. It is said sixty were killed and one hundred and fifty wounded.

I have been engaged for two days giving my testimony before the court of inquiry that is investigating the Petersburg disaster. It will take them a long time to get through, and I fancy active operations will interrupt their proceedings till such time that the witnesses will be scattered. Grant has not yet acted on my application to have Burnside relieved. The weather continues awfully hot, but the army is in good health.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, P. M., August 10, 1864.

The Washington papers of yesterday announce Sheridan being *temporarily assigned* to the military division which Grant told me was intended for me. Grant has been back two days, and has not vouchsafed one word in explanation, and I have avoided going to see him, from a sense of self-respect, and from the fear I should not be able to restrain the indignation I hold to be natural at the duplicity some one has practiced. In my last conversation with General

Grant he distinctly told me that if a military division was organized I should have the command, and that it was designed to give Sheridan only the command of that part of the Army of the Potomac temporarily detached. This order is not consistent with that statement.

To-day I got through with my evidence before the court of inquiry. Burnside, in his cross-examination, through a lawyer, undertook to impeach my testimony, though he disclaimed any such intention; but I gave him as good as he sent. I hear he was about apologizing to me for his disrespectful despatch, and was then going to resign; but on returning from Grant's headquarters, where he expressed this intention, he found my charges and letter, saying I had applied to have him relieved. I feel sorry for Burnside, because I really believe the man half the time don't know what he is about, and is hardly responsible for his acts.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 13, 1864.*

Grant was here yesterday to transact some business. I immediately asked him, how, after his promise to me, that if a military division was organized, I should be assigned to the command, he has placed my junior, Sheridan, there. He said Sheridan had not been assigned to the division, that no one was yet assigned to it, and that Sheridan had only been put in command of the troops in the field belonging to the different departments. I referred him to the order constituting the division, and assigning Sheridan temporarily to the command, and observed that temporarily I supposed meant as long as there was anything to do, or any object in holding the position. I further remarked that I regretted it had not been deemed a simple matter of justice to me to place me in this independent command. To which he made no remark. I really am not able to ascertain what are his real views. Sometimes I take the dark side, and think they are intentionally adverse to me, and at others I try to make myself believe that such is not his purpose. In confirmation of the last theory, I am of the opinion that he does not look and has not looked upon the movement in Maryland and the Valley in the important light it deserves, and that he considers it merely a raid which a display of force on our part will soon dissipate, when Sheridan and the troops will soon return here. But in this he is greatly mistaken. Already we have positive news that Lee has sent large reinforcements into the Valley, and there is no doubt it is his purpose to transfer the principal scene of operations there, if it can be accomplished.

To-morrow we are going to make a move to test his strength here, and endeavor to make him recall his troops. Should this fail, we will be obliged to go up there and leave Richmond.

The weather continues intensely hot.

The court of inquiry was going on, but this move will stop it, and I fear it will never come to an end. I have given my testimony, which I will send you to preserve as my record in the case. I have insisted on Burnside's being relieved. Grant has let him go on a leave, but he will never return whilst I am here.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 16, 1864.*

I am right glad the dear children are enjoying themselves. I wish I could be with you and them; but this is out of the question, and there is no use thinking about it. I have made up my mind to stick it out here, regardless of every consideration, except that of doing my duty at all hazards. They shall not say that any personal considerations caused me to turn my back upon the enemy.

Hancock has been fighting for two days across the James, and though he has met with success, yet he has not been able to break through the enemy's lines, he finding them everywhere in strong force. His demonstration, however, has undoubtedly prevented the sending of reinforcements to Early, as we had reason to believe they designed doing. Hancock, with his usual luck, has captured some guns and colors.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 18, 1864.*

Hancock's movement across the James has resulted in bringing on an action with a part of Lee's army, which at first was in our favor, but from their reinforcing him I judge Hancock has come to a stand still, and will not probably be able to effect more. Warren has gone to-day on a similar mission on our left, to see if he can find a weak spot in the enemy's line. His guns are now plainly heard. These movements are made by Grant, with a view to keep the enemy on the alert, prevent his detaching any troops to Early, and, if possible, compel his bringing back some of the troops in the Valley, and thus give Sheridan more chance.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 22, 1864.*

I have received your letters of the 18th and 19th insts. I have known of Sergeant's¹ condition for some time, because, when I found

¹ Son of General Meade.

he was so sick, I wrote to Dr. Hewson, who at once replied to me. Everything has been done for Sergeant that could be done. He has had the best medical advice, and the most careful nursing. This should be continued, and the result left to that Power who governs and rules all things, and to whose decree we must submit with resignation.

I have been very much occupied for several days past in the operations of my command on the Weldon Railroad, particularly Warren's Corps, who during this time has had three very pretty little fights, in all of which we have whipped the enemy, though we have suffered a good deal in casualties.¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 24, 1864.*

I see you have heard of the promotion of Sherman, Hancock and Sheridan, and noted the absence of my name. I cannot tell you how I felt when I first heard this, but I determined to keep quiet till I could obtain some explanation from General Grant. To-day was the first time I have seen him since I learned the intelligence. On my asking him the reason of my name being omitted when those recommended at the same time had been appointed, he answered it was his act; that he had asked for the immediate appointment of the others, but had not asked for mine; and the reason he had not asked for mine was, that if Sherman and myself had been appointed on the same day, I would rank him, and he wished Sherman to rank me. That neither his opinion nor that of the President and Secretary had changed with regard to me; that it was still a settled thing that I was to have the vacancy; and that he proposed to have me appointed, when I should be assigned to the command of the Middle Division, which he said he would have done before now, but for the peculiar position Sheridan was placed in, having to fall back, and if superseded now, it would be construed into a disapproval of his course, which was not the case. Of course to all this I had nothing to say. My object was to ascertain whether any fault was found with me, or whether any change of opinion had taken place since the last time he had assured me I was to be appointed when the others were. As he had disclaimed any such reasons, I did not care to know why I had been left out. I never expected, nor did I much care about, the appointment except to prove to the ignorant public that they

¹ Attack at the Weldon Railroad, August 19-21, 1864. Federal loss—killed, wounded, and missing—4,543 (O. R.).

had been imposed upon by a lying press. Nothing more was said upon the subject. The whole substance of the explanation was that he desired to advance his favorites, Sherman and Sheridan. I was left out because it would interfere with Sherman's rank to have me in, and Hancock was brought in because he could not appoint Sheridan before Hancock, not having recommended him when he did Hancock. Of course I could say nothing to this explanation. It would not do for me to claim promotion or express dissatisfaction at not receiving it. I had the right to ask why, after telling me I had been recommended, and would be appointed, I found I was not, but when the above explanation was made, however unjust I may have deemed such reasoning to be, I could take no notice of it, and could not with propriety complain. It is the same old story, an inability to appreciate the sensitiveness of a man of character and honor. Grant really thinks he is one of my best friends, and can't conceive why I should complain of a little delay in giving me what he tells me I am certainly to have. It is rather hard to have denied me the vindication which the Government might give to my course, by conferring a promotion that I have the most positive evidence it, the Government, has acknowledged I merited and should have. However, I suppose this, like all else, must be borne with patience.

We have had some pretty hard fighting to secure our lodgment on the Weldon Railroad. Grant and Warren are the heroes of the affair. I must confess I do not envy either of them their laurels, although in the Weldon Railroad affair Grant was sixteen miles away, and knew nothing but what was reported to him by myself. We lost a good many men in killed and wounded, but principally in prisoners. Our army is becoming much weakened by these repeated losses, and our only hope is that the enemy suffers proportionately. Their papers acknowledge in their last affairs a loss of five general officers.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 26, 1864.*

I have been for several days very much occupied, in the saddle all day, superintending the movements culminating in our securing a permanent lodgment on the Weldon Road. I think I wrote you of Warren's movements and his fights, which, although attended with heavy losses in prisoners, yet resulted in our retaining our hold and eventually inflicting great damage on the enemy. Soon after Warren was in position, Hancock was brought from the north side of the

James, and placed on the railroad, with two divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, and commenced the work of destroying the road. He had only destroyed about seven or eight miles, when the enemy, yesterday, attacked him with great vehemence and superior numbers. Hancock was in a good position, and repulsed all their attacks till about dark, when, becoming desperate, they hurled such masses against him, they were enabled to carry a small portion of his lines and a battery of eight guns. As soon as I found how heavily he was attacked, I hurried up reinforcements to him, but the distance was so great they did not arrive till after dark. Hancock's object, the destruction of the road, being frustrated, he was withdrawn at night. This was the only unfortunate part of the affair, for we this morning ascertained from some of our men who remained on the field that the enemy retired also during the night, leaving their wounded, with their dead unburied. It is said to be one of the severest battles of the war, and the enemy, being the attacking party, suffered terribly, our losses being comparatively light. Still, the loss of guns and our withdrawal will tell against us, though I would do the same thing to-morrow, and willingly lose guns, to make the enemy lose five killed and wounded to our one. Hancock expressed himself as confident of maintaining his position, and did not call for reinforcements, which I nevertheless sent as soon as I found how heavily he was engaged, and he now says he ought to have kept his lines intact, and would have done so but for the bad conduct of a part of his command, giving away when there was no excuse for it. After withdrawing, the enemy retired within his lines at Petersburg, and will, I think, let us alone for some time, and will hardly try for some time the plan of attacking us. These frequent affairs are gradually thinning both armies, and if we can only manage to make the enemy lose more than we do, we will win in the long run, but unfortunately, the offensive being forced on us, causes us to seek battle on the enemy's terms, and our losses are accordingly the greatest, except when they come out and attack, as recently, when they always get the worst of it.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *August 28, 1864.*

I received this evening yours of the 26th. In it you acknowledge the receipt, per Mr. England, of my testimony before the court of inquiry. The sittings of the court have been interrupted by our recent movements, but to-morrow they are to be resumed, and I trust they will push matters to a close and come to some conclusion before they are again interrupted.

I have written you of the fighting that has been going on for a week past. It has been quiet for the last two days. The enemy having left us in undisturbed possession of the railroad so long, our position is strengthened to such a degree he could not now drive us away. This is a great point gained, and we are satisfied with its accomplishment, notwithstanding it entailed heavy losses on us, particularly in prisoners. Poor young Crossman belonged to the regulars, and was killed in the first day's fight on the railroad. I understand he was shot in the head, being unconscious from the moment of receiving his wound till he expired, which occurred soon after. I believe he had not joined very long, and I was not aware of his being here. I sympathize most sincerely with his afflicted parents, but this is one of those dispensations that are almost daily taking place here.

I understand General Grant has been to Fortress Monroe and returned to-day with his wife and children. He has one little girl, and either two or three boys. He seems very much attached to his children, and his wife is said to possess a great deal of good sense, and to have exercised a most salutary effect over him. I do not know why she has given up St. Louis, her native place, but Grant told me the other day he intended to keep his family in Philadelphia for the next few years, probably for the education of his children.

I think we shall be quiet for some time, unless the enemy attacks, which I hardly think probable. Butler is away now, but when he returns I shall make an effort to get off for a few days, to have a peep at you and the children; but don't rely too much on my coming.¹

WAR DEPARTMENT, *September 8, 1864.*

I have been received with the greatest kindness both by the President and Mr. Stanton. At my request, Willie's² appointment was immediately made out and given to him, and Mr. Stanton said I might rest assured my major-generalcy would in due time be given me.

I am very much hurried and leave this afternoon at six.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 10, 1864.*

I reached here about 4 P. M. to-day, very sad and dispirited, as I reflect on Sergeant's³ ill health and your embarrassing position. I wrote you a few hurried lines from Washington by Willie Gerhard.

¹ General Meade left camp on September 1, and arrived at his home in Philadelphia on the 3d. He left Philadelphia on September 7, and arrived at Washington on the 8th.

² Brother of Mrs. Meade.

³ Son of General Meade.

I spent about half an hour with the President and some four hours with the Secretary. Both were very affable, apparently very glad to see me, and said many flattering things. The Secretary, particularly, kept me in his private room, to the exclusion of all other visitors, and was very sociable. I think I wrote you that when I told him of dear Sargie's ill health, he at once said if I wanted to send him to Cuba or New Orleans, he would place at my disposition a Government steamer to take him out there, which I considered very handsome.

We left Washington at 6 P. M. in a special steamer, which, although quite comfortable, was a very slow one, and we did not reach City Point till 12 M. to-day, though the ordinary run would have brought us there at 6 P. M. yesterday. I saw Grant for a little while before coming here, and he told me he was near telegraphing me to come back on Monday, as on that day there were indications the enemy was going to attack; but they passed away, and he let me alone.

I have thought a great deal about you, and the more I think, the more I am puzzled. I really do not see anything that can be done except your accompanying Sergeant, and I think the best place to go is the Island of Madeira. This would not diminish our expenses any; still I don't see what other arrangement can be made. If you could only hear of some kind friend who was going to Europe, who would take care of Sergeant, and thus render your going unnecessary, it would be a great relief, as your leaving the younger children is a very great disadvantage. Still, we must accommodate ourselves to things as they are, and not as we would have them, and yield everything in the hope that dear Sargie will be benefitted by the change of scene and air, and under the blessing of God his health restored. I dream about you all the time, and cannot dismiss you from my thoughts day or night.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 15, 1864.*

General Grant went this morning to Harper's Ferry to visit Sheridan. There were some indications of a movement on Lee's part yesterday, but nothing occurring this morning, he went off. He is to be absent, I believe, some five or six days. What Grant meant by the rebels deserting at the rate of a regiment a day, referred, I presume, to their desertions in all parts of the field, and to the present diminished size of their regiments. This would make a daily deser-

tion of about three hundred. I have no means of knowing what proportion of this amount is drawn from the returns of other armies; but, in the Army of the Potomac, ten a day would be a liberal estimate of the deserters who have come into our lines for some time past. I think Grant was a little hyperbolic in the expression he used. He is of a very sanguine temperament, and sees everything favorable in a strong light, and makes light of all obstacles. In some respects this is an admirable quality, if it is not carried to extremes.

I don't think that I told you that, day before yesterday, I presented to some soldiers of the Fifth Corps medals of honor, conferred upon them for good conduct on the field of battle. There was a great ceremony on the occasion, and I made a few remarks, which I presume will appear in print. The weather, after being cool, has again become warm. Sickness is beginning to show itself.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 16, 1864.*

Enclosed is a receipt of Adams & Co.'s Express for a small box containing the beautiful pistol presented to me by the New York Metropolitan Fair, which I send home for safe-keeping.

Yesterday General Grant took his departure, and to-day my ill luck has brought a rebel cavalry raid, in which they dashed into our lines and succeeded in driving off about two thousand head of cattle that had been, contrary to my judgment, sent down the James River for grazing, to a point just inside our cavalry pickets, and where they were exposed at any moment to be run off, as they have been by a *coup-de-main*. Grant's absence, and the usual friendly spirit of the press, will undoubtedly attribute this loss to my negligence, and I really had as much to do with it as you had, except that I had called attention to the danger of having the cattle there. The cattle were not under my control, or that of my commissary, but under a commissary serving on Grant's staff.

I have this evening a letter from Mr. Cropsey, asking permission to return to the army. I do not altogether like its tone or spirit, but shall not take any other notice of it than to send him a pass.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 17, 1864.*

I wish you would dismiss all politics from your mind; I think you allow yourself to be unnecessarily harassed about such matters. I fancy we shall be happy, never mind who is President, if God will

only spare my life, restore me to you and the children, and graciously permit dear Sergeant's health to be re-established. Besides, politics are so mixed up that, thinking about them, and trying to unravel their mysteries, is enough to set a quiet person crazy.

I got a nice note last evening, and a box, from Lyman. The box had five hundred cigars in it, which he said were a present from his patriotic sister, Mrs. Howland Shaw, and his wife, so you see how I am honored. By-the-by, talking of presents, I have never suitably acknowledged Mr. Tier's handsome present of a box of tea. I wish you would tell him it is most excellent, just the kind I like, and that all the members of my mess, including the French officers, one of whom served in China and is therefore a judge, are equally with myself delighted with the flavor and hold him in most honorable and grateful remembrance. Poor Colonel de Chanal has received letters from the Minister of War, who does not seem to be oversatisfied with his reports from the field, and wants more information about our arsenals and manufacture of arms and munitions; so the colonel is going to leave us, to travel; which I regret very much, as he does, for I believe he has become quite attached to our service and the officers of my staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 22, 1864.*

To-day we have Mr. Stanton's despatch announcing Sheridan's brilliant victory. I am very glad for the cause and glad for Sheridan's sake; but I must confess to enough human weakness to regret this opportunity of distinction was denied me, who was, I think, from previous service and present position, entitled to it. It is all settled, however, now, as I see Mr. Stanton announces Sheridan has been permanently assigned to the Middle Military Division, and that he has been made a brigadier general in the regular army. This last piece of disingenuous news will be amusing to those who know he was appointed to this place six weeks ago, in advance of his present well-merited laurels. My time I suppose has passed, and I must now content myself with doing my duty unnoticed.

George¹ and I both continue very well. I did not intend to alarm you about the health of the army. I only meant to say we were beginning to experience in a slight degree the effects of a residence in this not very healthy location. Still, taking all things into consideration, the health of the army is wonderful. The enemy predicted we

¹ Son of General Meade.

would never be able to pass the summer here, and counted largely on the fevers of the country driving us away.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 23, 1864.*

To-night we have the news of Sheridan's second victory at Fisher's Hill, near Strasburg. This is very great news. The destruction and dispersion of Early's army is a very great feat, and at once relieves Maryland and Pennsylvania of any fears of more invasion this year. If now we are only rapidly reinforced, we may be enabled to give Lee some hard blows before he can recruit and increase his army.

I feel quite unhappy about Sergeant¹ having to go away, though I have the highest hopes of the good effect of the change of climate.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 25, 1864.*

To-day we had a visit from Mr. Secretary Seward and Mr. Congressman Washburn. I had some little talk with Mr. Seward, who told me that at the North and at the South, and everywhere abroad, there was a strong conviction the war would soon terminate, and, said he, when so many people, influenced in such different ways, all unite in one conviction, there must be reason to believe peace is at hand. He did not tell me on what he founded his hopes, nor did I ask.

Sheridan's defeat of Early will prove a severe blow to the rebs, and will, I think, compel them to do something pretty soon to retrieve their lost prestige. There have been rumors they were going to evacuate Petersburg, and I should not be surprised if they did contract their lines and draw in nearer Richmond. I never did see what was their object in defending Petersburg, except to check us; it had no other influence, because, if we were able to take Richmond, we could take Petersburg; and after taking the one when resisted, the other would be more easily captured.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *September 27, 1864.*

Sheridan's victories are undoubtedly important, as all victories are; but it now turns out Early was preparing to leave the Valley, and a considerable part of his force had already gone, so that Sheridan when he attacked had greatly superior numbers. This is the secret of a great many brilliant victories. Nevertheless, the destruction of a part of Early's forces, and the number of prisoners taken,

¹ Son of General Meade.

are matters of great importance, sure to inspirit our army and people, and depress the enemy. These are points gained.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 1, 1864.*

I have only time to write you a few hurried lines. We have been actively engaged for the last two days, and yesterday we had a pretty sharp fight, gaining some advantages and meeting with some checks.

George¹ and myself are well. Willie Sergeant² has arrived with his regiment, and is under my command. He is well and in good spirits.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 3, 1864.*

I have not been able to write you for several days, as I have been so absorbed in our recent movements, which I believe are now successful. These consisted in a movement by Butler on the north side of the James, in the hope of surprising the enemy, and possibly getting into Richmond. The enemy was surprised, and part of his third line of defenses taken from him and is still held by us. As Lee was obliged to detach heavily to meet Butler's movement, it was thought probable I might, by extending to the left, get into Petersburg. I did extend my lines some two and a half miles, had quite a brisk affair with the enemy, but did not succeed in taking Petersburg. Of course, extending both flanks in this way, we had to weaken our centre, and this is the danger of this kind of movement; but Lee appears so determined to be prudent and cautious. He confines himself strictly to the defensive, and lets slip the chances for a *coup* we offer him.

On the second day, whilst I was on horseback on the field, talking to Generals Griffin and Bartlett, surrounded by my staff and escort, a shell fell in our midst, grazing Humphreys's horse, grazing and striking my left leg, just below the knee, passing between Griffin and Bartlett, and embedding itself in the ground in the centre of a group of officers, covering them all with earth, but without exploding or injuring a soul. A more wonderful escape I never saw. At first I thought my leg was gone, as I felt and heard the blow plainly, but it only rubbed the leather of my riding-boot, without even bruising the skin. Afterwards Colonel Lyman had the shell dug up, and is going to preserve it. How would you like to have me back minus a leg and on crutches?

¹ Son of General Meade.

² Brother of Mrs. Meade.

I have seen your brother Willie several times. He seems in good spirits and quite pleased at being assigned to the Army of the Potomac instead of Butler's army. I had no place on my staff for your friend Captain Wister, but General Humphreys will take him for the present, as two of his aides have just left him, their times being out, though they intend trying to get new commissions to rejoin him. George¹ is quite well. He was in the crowd when the shell dropped among us.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 7, 1864.*

I was afraid you would be uneasy at not hearing from me during our recent operations, but my headquarters were some five or six miles from the scene of action, and it was always at midnight when I got back, tired out with the day's work, and had to start early in the morning, so that I really did not have time to write.

I see the papers announce my narrow escape. It was a pretty close shave, as I have written you. You need not worry yourself; I am not going to commit the folly of foolish and unnecessary exposure. But there are times when it is my duty and it is proper I should take my chances. Let us hope Providence will always be as merciful and protecting as in this instance; for I take it, it was only God's will that saved my leg and perhaps my life.

The enemy have allowed us to retain the ground acquired by our recent movement, and seem to be busy fortifying against another advance. We have been reinforced, but not to the extent imagined by the sanguine public; neither is Richmond so near its fall as you tell me people believe. However, these absurd alternations of exaggerated anticipations of successes and reverses seem to be chronic with our people, and no amount of experience will ever cure them of the folly.

I note all you say of politics, but in the army we take but little interest except earnestly to wish the election was over, as we see, until it is, nothing else will be thought of and no proper thought given to the war. It is generally believed here that McClellan has very little chance. I think he is very unfortunate in his friends and backers.

I see the *Chronicle* announces me as a supporter of Mr. Lincoln, and is pleased to class me among the ill-treated generals who have been driven into the opposition. Well, the one has as much author-

¹ Son of General Meade.

ity for his assertion as the other, neither having anything on which to base his remarks.

Grant has gone to Washington, leaving Butler in command. To-day the enemy made a demonstration on Butler, and I thought we were going to have a grand time, but it passed off.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 9, 1864.*

We have at last heard of the fate of poor young Parker, who was on my staff. An officer recently returned from Richmond says he was captured by guerrillas near Bristol Station, a few days after Parker's disappearance; that when they were taking him off they cautioned him not to attempt to escape, for if he did they would be obliged to serve him as they had done General Meade's aide a few days before, who in spite of their cautions tried to get away, and they were forced to shoot him. I have no doubt this is a true statement of the poor fellow's fate. I have sent it to Cortlandt Parker.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 11, 1864.*

I have been occupied all day riding round the lines, showing them to Major General Doyle, of the British Army, Governor of Nova Scotia, who has done this army the honor to visit it. The general is a very clever, intelligent and educated Irish gentleman. He is a brother to the then young Doyle, who, some thirty years since, was in this country attached to the British Legation under Sir Charles Vaughn.

The general expressed himself very much amazed at the length of our lines and the amount of engineering work we had done, and said that in Europe they had no conception of the character of the war we are engaged in, the obstacles we have to encounter, and the completeness of our organization. De Chanal, indeed all our foreign visitors, say the same thing; and say it is impossible for us to realize the ignorance that exists in Europe of America and American affairs. General Doyle is the person who behaved so well recently at Halifax when the steamer *Chesapeake* was seized and carried in there, he giving up the vessel and crew to a United States vessel of war that was after her. Another visitor whom I had yesterday was a Mr. McGrath, a Commissioner from Pennsylvania, sent down to take the soldiers' vote to-day. He seemed rather disgusted with the result of his mission; said very few of the soldiers had qualified themselves to vote and altogether appeared quite indifferent. He seemed to

think the soldiers' vote would be very insignificant. I have noticed this fact myself, that is the indifference to politics on the part of officers and men. They don't seem to have much respect for either party, and are of the opinion that the safety and honor of the country are more dependent on what we do here than on the success of any political party. I don't say this is a very healthy or proper state of feeling, but I say it exists, and is due, I believe, in a great measure, to a want of confidence in the integrity and patriotism of party leaders.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 13, 1864.*

I undoubtedly do not occupy the position I did just after the battle of Gettysburg, and no one will retain any such position in this country, unless he continues to be successful; but when you compare my position with my numerous predecessors, McClellan, Pope, McDowell, Burnside, Hooker, Rosecrans, Banks, Sigel and many others, I think you will admit that my retaining command, and the hold I have at present, is even more creditable than the exaggerated laudation immediately succeeding Gettysburg. Recollect, also, that most persistent efforts have been made by influential men, politicians and generals, to destroy me, without success; and I think you will find reason to be grateful and satisfied, even though you should desire to see more justice done. I don't mean to say I have not been badly treated, but I do mean to say I might have been much worse treated, and that my present *status* is not without advantages, and does not justify my being discontented.

I am very much distressed to hear that Sergeant¹ does not seem well enough to bear a sea voyage, and still hope the fine weather of the fall will enable him to gather strength.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 18, 1864.*

Yesterday General Grant came up in the morning with the Secretary of War, Secretary of the Treasury, the Collector of New York, Mr. Hooper, member of Congress from Boston, together with several military dignitaries. They spent a short time at my headquarters, from whence I took them to see a part of the lines, after which they returned to City Point, I accompanying them. At City Point I met Admiral Porter and Captain Frailey, each with his wife. As these ladies desired greatly to go to the front and see some rebels, I per-

¹ Son of General Meade.

sueded their husbands to return with me, and we stopped the cars near Hancock's headquarters, inspected our line and the rebel works, and then went to Hancock's headquarters, who got us up a comfortable supper, and after dark shelled the enemy's lines. They seemed greatly delighted, and returned about 10 p. m. to City Point.

Mr. Stanton was, as he always is, most kind and civil to me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 19, 1864.*

I am very glad you went to see Mrs. Birney. The telegraph to-day announces her husband's decease. This has shocked every one here, for no one had any idea he was so ill. General Birney is undoubtedly a loss to the army. He was a very good soldier, and very energetic in the performance of his duties. During the last campaign he had quite distinguished himself. I feel greatly for his poor wife, who is thus so suddenly deprived of her husband and protector. When he left here he was said to be threatened with a serious attack, but it was hoped change of air and being at home would keep it off. He must have been much more sick than persons generally, or he himself, were aware of, because he was very reluctant to leave.

To-day I had a visit from the Rev. Dr. Pyne, of Washington, who has come to the army to visit a poor creature, a Frenchman, who deserted the service and then re-enlisted to get the large bounties. He was sentenced to be shot, but at the earnest solicitation of Dr. Pyne, and of his representations, I remitted the sentence to imprisonment at the Dry Tortugas.

I saw General Grant to-day, and we had a laugh over the ridiculous *canard* of my being relieved. He then told me he was asked in Washington if it was true, it being reported at the same time that he had resigned. These foolish reports were doubtless gotten up for political purposes and to affect the elections.

To-day Robert Meade¹ went down the river in the flag-of-truce boat, having been exchanged. I saw a young navy officer who was captured at the same time and exchanged with Robert. He said Robert was well, but thin, as he had felt his captivity a good deal. His mother will be delighted to have him once more at home.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 22, 1864.*

Since I wrote to you we have received the news of Sheridan's last victory—this time over Longstreet, and with an army that had

¹ Nephew of General Meade.

been surprised and driven in disorder for four miles. This certainly is very remarkable, and if not modified by any later intelligence, will prove one of the greatest feats of the war, and place Sheridan in a position that it will be difficult for any other general to approach. We are now anxiously waiting to hear of his having followed up his success and taken Gordonsville, when he can destroy the railroad from Lynchburg to Richmond, which runs through Gordonsville, and is called the Virginia Central Road. If he does this, he will aid our operations here most materially, because, until that road is destroyed, we cannot compel the evacuation of Richmond, even if we succeed in seizing or breaking the Southside and the Danville Roads. I suppose, in a short time, a movement will be made to get on the Southside Road and complete the investment of Petersburg, from the Appomattox, below to above the town.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 23, 1864.*

I have seen to-day for the first time a most virulent attack on me in Henry Ward Beecher's paper, the *Independent*.¹ The piece has been in camp, I find, for several days, and many officers have been talking about it, but purposely refrained from letting me see it. I heard of it accidentally this afternoon at Grant's headquarters, where I was on business. I cannot imagine who is the instigator of this violent assault. The idea that I hang on Grant, like the Old Man of the Sea, and am retained in command in spite of that officer's desire to be rid of me solely on the ground of "fancied political necessity," is most amusing. I had not seen the article when I was with Grant, or I should have called his attention to it. After all, it is probably not worth while to notice it.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 25, 1864.*

When I last wrote I told you of the fiendish and malicious attack on me in the New York *Independent*, Henry Ward Beecher's paper. I enclose you the article. I also send you a correspondence I have had with General Grant upon the subject, to whom I appealed for something that would set at rest these idle and malicious reports, based on the presumption I had failed to support him and that he was anxious to get rid of me. His reply, you will perceive, which was made by telegraph, while it expresses sympathy for the injustice acknowledged to be done me, proposes to furnish me with copies of the despatches he has written in which my name has been mentioned.

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix Q.

The number and character of these despatches I am ignorant of; nor do I know whether I would be authorized to publish General Grant's official despatches; but I shall await their receipt before taking any further action. This matter has worried me more than such attacks usually do, because I see no chance for the truth being made public, as it should be. However, I will not make any further comments, but leave these papers to speak for themselves. I wish you to preserve them with the other papers relating to my services.

"Telegram" from Grant mentioned in last letter:

Grant to Meade:

CITY POINT, Oct. 24, 1864.

Your note by the hand of Lieut. Dunn is received. I have felt as much pained as you at the constant stabs made at you by a portion of the public press. I know nothing better to give you to use in answer to these charges than copies of every dispatch sent to Washington by me in which your name is used.

These will show at least that I have never expressed dissatisfaction at any portion of your services.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, October 27, 1864.

I moved to-day with the greater portion of the Army of the Potomac, intending, if practicable, to make a lodgment on the Southside Railroad. We, however, found the enemy so strongly entrenched, and the character of the country was such, we were not able to accomplish reaching the road. We have had some quite sharp fighting, principally Hancock's Corps on our side, in which we successfully resisted the attempts of the enemy to check our advance or dislodge us from positions taken. We shall, however, I think, be under the necessity of returning to our entrenched lines. General Grant has been on the field all day, sanctioning everything that was done. At one time both Grant and myself were under a heavy artillery fire, but luckily none of either of our large corteges were touched.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, October 29, 1864.

I had a conversation with Grant in reference to my letter about Beecher's article, and told him I did not care about his despatches, but desired he would furnish me a few lines for publication, that

would set at rest, as far as he was concerned, the wicked and malicious falsehoods which that article contained. This he said he would most cheerfully give me. At the same time I told him that, whilst I did not doubt the good feeling of the President and Secretary for me, yet I was satisfied of the existence of a bitter hostility towards me on the part of certain supporters of the President, and I did not desire to embarrass Mr. Lincoln, nor did I wish to retain command by mere sufferance; and that, unless some measures were taken to satisfy the public and silence the persistent clamor against me, I should prefer being relieved; that I was becoming disheartened, and my usefulness and influence with the army were being impaired. In all successful operations I was ignored, and the moment anything went wrong I was held wholly responsible, and rather than continue in this way, I would prefer retiring, and desired him to say this to the President.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *October 31, 1864.*

I have reason to believe you are in error in imputing any sympathy on the part of Grant with my detractors. It is true he has not exerted himself to silence or contradict them, but this arises from a very different cause. Grant is very phlegmatic, and holds in great contempt newspaper criticism, and thinks, as long as a man is sustained by his own conscience, his superiors, and the Government, that it is not worth his while to trouble himself about the newspapers. At the same time, he has always expressed himself in the manner in which he did in the telegram I sent you. Differently constituted, with more sensitiveness in his nature, I don't doubt he would before now have taken some action, either in his official despatches, or in some other way given publicity to such opinions of my services as would set at rest these idle stories.

In our recent move we captured Peyton Wise, Lieutenant Colonel Forty-sixth Virginia Infantry. You may remember him as Mrs. Tully Wise's bright boy, when we were first married. I did not see him, as he was taken to City Point before I knew of his capture, but I sent word to General Patrick, the Provost Marshal, to treat him as well as possible and furnish him with a little money. He wrote me a letter full of thanks, and expressing a great deal of very proper feeling. I understood if our men had gotten a little further into the enemy's works, they would have captured General Wise,¹ as he was not far from the place where Peyton was taken.

¹ Henry A. Wise, brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

Grant has required me to make some kind of a report of the campaign, and I shall be very busy for some time.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 5, 1864.*

I have at length finished my report of the campaign. It was a pretty difficult task, to recount the operations of this army for the past six months, to do anything like justice, and at the same time avoid tedious and unnecessary details. I feel a little nervous about the result, as I do not see how I am to avoid errors and giving cause for offense, particularly if I tell the truth. I have confined myself, however, to a brief narrative of the actual movements, with as few comments as possible.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 7, 1864.*

I see you have taken the cue of the newspapers, and imagine the campaign is over, and that we are going into winter quarters; but you are greatly mistaken; I don't believe active operations will cease this winter unless we should have the good luck to get into Richmond. There seems to be quite a talk of Mr. Stanton's being made Chief Justice, and, were it not for the Senate, I should myself think it quite probable. I should, however, regret his leaving the War Department, for I do not know who there is to take his place, who would be as satisfactory. I should esteem it a great misfortune to see either Banks or Butler there. I have not seen General Grant since last Sunday week. I am, therefore, quite ignorant of what is going on; for being "out of the ring," I never ask any questions.

To-morrow is election day. I hope it will pass off quietly, that all good citizens will submit to and abide by the result, and that, this question being settled, attention will be turned to filling our ranks and raising more troops, so that we can have the means of bringing this war to a close, which will never be over without much more hard fighting.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 9, 1864.*

The election passed off very quietly yesterday. About nineteen thousand votes, of which thirteen thousand five hundred were for Lincoln, and five thousand five hundred for McClellan, giving Lincoln a majority in this army of about eight thousand votes. Of these, three thousand five hundred were the majority of the Pennsylvania soldiers. During the day, much to my horror, one of the

Republican agents reported the distribution of spurious or altered poll books, and charged certain Democratic agents as the parties guilty of the act. I had no other course to pursue than to arrest the parties complained against, until an investigation could be had. To-day we have been examining the matter, and there appears to be no doubt that poll books were brought here and distributed, having names of Republican electors misspelled and some omitted. The Democrats declare it is only a typographical error, and does not vitiate the use of the books, whereas the Republicans charge that it is a grave and studied effort to cheat the soldiers of their vote. In this dilemma I have applied to the Secretary of War, and asked for authority to send the parties either to Pennsylvania, to be tried by the courts there, or to Washington, to be disposed of by the Department and Doubleday's Commission, now trying the New York agent. This affair has bothered me very much. All these people are citizens of Philadelphia, and are said to be respectable. I had, however, but one course to pursue, and was compelled to notice the complaints presented to me. We have no news from the elections outside of the army, except that they passed off quietly with you and in New York; in the latter place, doubtless, owing to the presence and order of Major General Butler. Well, the election is over, with the result I expected, and now I hope no time will be lost in regulating the army.

I trust, now the election is over, measures will be taken to raise men to fill our ranks, and no time should be lost, as I don't think we can count on more than a month of good weather. To-be-sure, we can and doubtless will stay here all winter; and being so near each other, may manage to keep fighting on. But I don't think any operations involving any movement can be had after the beginning of December.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 11, 1864.*

I note all you write of dear Sergeant,¹ and of his condition. It is hard for me to know that he continues so sick, and that I cannot be with you to assist in taking care of him and in trying to keep up his courage and spirits. I never doubted Sergeant's firmness of purpose and moral courage. He had too often exhibited these qualities in the highest degree. I fully sympathize with you in your anxiety, but can only urge you to watch him closely. I am glad Mr. Keith goes

¹ Son of General Meade.

to see him; the intercourse of good and liberal men and women cannot but be beneficial, and I consider Mr. Keith one of the best of men.

The Secretary of War relieved me of my political imbroglio by ordering me to send the persons arrested to Washington. From all I could understand of the matter, these people are innocent of any wrong intended; it is known no wrong was actually perpetrated. Still, when they were charged by others with intent to commit fraud, I was compelled, under the orders of the Department and my own sense of duty, to hold them in arrest until the matter could be investigated.

Mr. Johnny Reb has been moving about to-day, as if he had taken it into his head to do something. I am sure I would be very grateful to Lee if he would try his hand at the offensive for awhile.

To-day's papers say Sherman has burned Atlanta and moved on Charleston. This is a bold move, the success of which will depend on Thomas's ability to keep Hood out of Kentucky and Ohio.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 13, 1864.*

To-day I had a visit from a Colonel Coles, of the English Army, who is the Military Commandant of New Brunswick. He was quite a gentlemanly person. I took him around our lines and showed him all that was to be seen.

Grant has gone to-day to pay a visit to Admiral Porter, at Fortress Monroe, and as Butler is absent, this leaves me in command of all the forces operating against Richmond.

I suppose you have seen Mr. Davis's Message to the Confederate Congress. Although a dignified and well-written document, to my mind it betrays unmistakable evidences of despondency. His proposition to arm and free forty thousand slaves, to make engineer soldiers, is most significant, for nothing but an acknowledged exhaustion of the white race could ever make him willing to free and arm the black race. The idea of limiting the number to forty thousand, and making them engineer soldiers, simply means that this is an experiment, the result of which is doubtful, and until the fidelity of the race is tested, it is better not to have too many. I think this is prudential on their part, for I cannot believe they will get the blacks to fight for them.

Gibbon was here to-day, the first time I have seen him since his return.

I judge from the tone of the *Tribune*, *Washington Chronicle*, and other Administration papers, that there is a disposition on the part of the successful party to be magnanimous and invite harmony among all the friends of the Union. I see it reported the President has declined McClellan's resignation, and it is said is going to give him a command. I doubt the latter part, but think the former very probable. I have no means of hearing or knowing anything that is going on till it is made public. I never go to City Point, and Grant does not come here, so that I am not *au courant des affaires*.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, November 15, 1864.

I am very glad Bishop Odenheimer was so kind as to visit you and talk to Sergeant, and am truly happy to hear dear Sergeant proposes to make public what I felt sure was the case, that he is a sincere and good Christian. With such a life of devotion to duty, and freedom from all the faults that youth is liable to, it needed for me no more evidence to feel satisfied that my dear boy was in the right path as far as human infirmity admitted.

I hear from City Point this evening that McClellan's resignation has been accepted, and that Sheridan has been appointed a major general in the regular army. It is also reported that General Canby, commanding in Louisiana, has been mortally wounded whilst going up Red River.

An officer called to see me to-day, just from Detroit, bringing me many kind messages from friends. This officer says that, whilst at a hotel in Columbus, Ohio, he heard a man publicly proclaim that the Army of the Potomac, under my influence, was going to vote for McClellan. My friend told the individual his statement was false, that he knew me and the army, and he knew I would never influence a man for either side, and he knew the army would vote largely for Mr. Lincoln. But this report of my interference was circulated all through the Western country.

*To John Sergeant Meade:*¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, November 17, 1864.

Well, the election is over, and nobody hurt. In the army it passed off very quietly, Mr. Lincoln receiving two votes to McClellan's one. This result was fully anticipated by me—indeed, McClellan's vote was larger than I expected.

¹ Son of General Meade.

The election being over, it is now to be hoped the earnest attention and best energies of the Government and people will be devoted to raising and sending men enough so to swell our armies that our onward movement will be irresistible, and the Confederacy convinced that further resistance is useless. There are significant signs that our enemies are beginning to feel the exhaustion and effects of a three years' war. Among these the most important is the proposition of Mr. Davis to arm forty thousand slaves, who are to receive their freedom as a boon for faithful services. They are to be employed, it is ingeniously said, as engineer troops, and to act as a reserve to be called on in an emergency. This is a plausible disguise, to sound the temper of the Southern people on the question of arming and freeing the slaves. Nothing but the conviction of the necessity of this measure could ever have justified its enunciation. It has produced the most violent discussions pro and con in the Southern journals, and bids fair to be as great a firebrand with them as it has been with us. My own judgment is it will be abandoned, for although the number as yet is fixed at forty thousand, as a test, to see if the negroes can be relied on and will fight, I believe that the experiment will prove that the arming the slaves is more dangerous to the Confederacy than to us. I have no doubt that many will be faithful to their masters, but the great body will, after being armed, desert to us or go back to their homes. Now, in view of the position the South has always taken on this subject the change of ground can only be attributed to desperation, and a conviction that the war in its present gigantic proportions cannot much longer be carried on by the whites at the South. Should this theory be correct, the end cannot be far distant, when we have such armies in the field, as we ought to and I hope soon will have.

I have recently picked up a story in verse by Owen Meredith, called "Lucille." I don't suppose you are well enough to read a great deal. The story is quite interesting, and told with much pathos, though I don't think the poetry very superior.

We have recently had an influx of John Bulls in the form of officers and others. You would have been delighted to see the admirable display of whiskers, fine clothes, etc. An amusing incident occurred with Rosencrantz, who was showing a couple of them our lines. On finding him a foreigner, they were delighted and said, now you can tell us what the American officers really think of us. "Vell," said Rosey, "they no like you, they say, 'ven this war be over they

vill take Canada.'” “God bless me, you don't say so,” they exclaimed, and did not ask Rosey any more questions of this nature. Approaching a part of the lines, where it was dangerous from sharpshooters, Rosey said they had better not go, but they pooh-poohed him, and he started on. Pretty soon the balls began to fly pretty thick and close, when they changed their mind, expostulated, and finally begged Rosey to turn back, but he had his dander up and replied, “No, ve vill go on, ve vill go on,” and go on he did, and return, fortunately without any one being hit.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 20, 1864.*

General Grant promised me he would, when in Washington, use all his influence to have justice done to me, disclaimed any agency in Sheridan's appointment, acknowledged I was entitled to it before, and ought now to be appointed his senior; and that if he found any difficulty in Washington (which he did not anticipate) he would have me relieved. He furthermore expressed regret at not having insisted on my appointment when Sherman was appointed, and assured me my not being assigned to the Middle Military Division was accidental, as he always intended I should go there, until it was too late. Finally, he assured me, on his word of honor, he had never entertained or expressed any but the strongest feeling in my favor, and that whenever speaking or writing of me, he had expressed his appreciation of my services. Now, I *believe* Grant, hence my eyes are not opened by Sheridan's appointment. He was to return to Washington to-night, spend to-morrow and perhaps the next day there, and then return here. I shall await his return and hear what he has to say.

Every other officer in this army, except myself, who has been recommended for promotion for services in this campaign has been promoted. It is rather hard I am to be the only exception to this rule.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 22, 1864.*

I do not know how the fact of my not voting has reached Philadelphia, or is there considered a matter of importance. One of the Republican agents, formerly an officer in the Reserves, came to see me and desired I would vote at the polls of the regiment where he

was going to be. I declined going to his polls, but did not intimate to him whether I was or was not going to vote. It is probable, however, that some zealous partisan has watched to see what I did. I cannot but be flattered that so much importance is attached to my action, particularly as nearly all other general officers, including Grant, did the same—that is, not vote.

I should like to see the article in the British *Military Review* you refer to. It is some consolation to know that distinguished foreigners think well of you.

To Henry A. Cram,¹ New York:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, November 24, 1864.

I thank you most gratefully for your opinion that Time and History will do me justice, but I very much fear your kind feeling has caused the wish to be father to the thought. No man in this country will be appreciated who does not dazzle his fellow-citizens with continued brilliant success. Fortunately I knew so much of the fickleness and unreasonableness of public opinion, that when I was elevated to my present position I was prepared for the reaction and my fall; indeed, considering all things, I consider myself very fortunate in having retained my position so long as I have. However, I don't want to inflict a letter of complaints on you. I have done and shall continue to do my duty to the best of my ability, and try to be contented under whatever it may please God to have happen to me. Adopting the philosophy of the Irishman who, when going into battle, said he would consider himself "kilt"; if he was, it would be no more than he expected; if he got through safe, it would be clear gain. So, expecting nothing, all acts of justice and kindness that fall to my lot I shall consider so much gain.

I am sorry to hear what you say of Grant, but it is in accordance with my theory and experience. Public expectation in his case, as in Sherman's, having been wrought up to a false and unreasonable pitch, expecting impossibilities and miracles, visits on them the failure to do what only public imagination renders practicable. Both these men at one time were down. Sherman was pronounced crazy, and Grant was at one time deprived of command; and now, should success by any accident attend the efforts of either, their stars will be more in the ascendant than ever.

¹ Brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

Grant is not a mighty genius, but he is a good soldier, of great force of character, honest and upright, of pure purposes, I think, without political aspirations, certainly not influenced by them. His prominent quality is unflinching tenacity of purpose, which blinds him to opposition and obstacles—certainly a great quality in a commander, when controlled by judgment, but a dangerous one otherwise. Grant is not without his faults and weaknesses. Among these is a want of sensibility, an almost too confident and sanguine disposition, and particularly a simple and guileless disposition, which is apt to put him, unknown to himself, under the influence of those who should not influence him, and desire to do so only for their own purposes. Take him all in all, he is, in my judgment, the best man the war has yet produced. When I say this, I refer more particularly to those I have come in contact with, and do not include Sherman, about whom I know nothing but what I see in the papers. I like Grant, and our relations have been very friendly. He has always in words expressed himself most kindly towards me, and I believe does feel so; but his acts, from causes alluded to above, have not been so; but I acquit him of any actual intention of injustice. His coming here has resulted virtually in setting me aside, almost as effectually as if I had been relieved. To be sure, I saw this plainly before he came. He did not see it then, and he don't see it now; there is the difference between us. I over-sensitive, and he deficient in sensibility. There are many things in Grant that call for my warmest admiration, and but few that I feel called on to condemn. He has been greatly over-rated; but I should be really sorry to see him, through a reaction, under-estimated. Let all this be confidential between us. Grant will make use of me or any one else to carry out his views, but he will always do justice to others, though he may often be slow in doing so, and let slip opportunities presenting themselves, because he does not see they are opportunities. Early in the campaign he recommended me strongly for appointment as major general in the regular army, recommending Sherman at the same time. Yet he has not only had Sherman made, but has now permitted them to make Sheridan, who was not dreamed of at the time I was recommended. Still he did not appreciate that this was injustice to me; but when I called his attention to it, and explained how I thought it was unjust, he readily and frankly acknowledged I was right.

I am very glad to hear you propose to visit camp this winter.

Unless we are much stronger than we are now, I see no prospect of taking Richmond. It is a pure question of numbers, requiring on our part great superiority, and even then it is not going to be a very easy task. If the good people will only turn out and fight with the unanimity they have voted to do so, we will soon bring the war to a close. There is no doubt the last dependence of the South is a divided North. The election has not dissipated this hope; but swelling our armies, promptly and cheerfully, with the bone and sinew of the country (not miserable foreigners and substitutes), who come to fight, and not for money, this, when it happens, will, in conjunction with hard fighting, open the eyes of the South and bring it to terms, if anything will.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, November 25, 1864.

On my return from my visit to General Grant, I found your letter of the 23d inst. General Grant told me that, as soon as he spoke to the President, the President acknowledged the justice of his statements, and said he had hesitated when appointing Sheridan on the very ground of its seeming injustice to me, and he at once, at General Grant's suggestion, ordered the Secretary to make out my appointment, to date from August 19th, the day of the capture of the Weldon Railroad, thus making me rank Sheridan and placing me fourth in rank in the regular army. Grant virtually acknowledged that my theory of Sheridan's appointment was the correct one, and that without doubt, had the matter been suggested at the time, I would have been appointed a few days in advance.

As justice is thus finally done me, I am satisfied—indeed, I question, if left to me, whether I should have desired my appointment announced in the way Sheridan's has been. At one thing I am particularly gratified, and that is at this evidence of Grant's truthfulness and sincerity. I am willing to admit, as he does himself, that his omissions have resulted unfavorably to me, but I am satisfied he is really and truly friendly to me. I like Grant, and always have done so, notwithstanding I saw certain elements in his character which were operating disadvantageously to me.

To-morrow I am going with General Grant to visit General Butler's famous canal at Dutch Gap. Grant does not think Mr. Stanton will be removed, or that he desires the Chief-Justiceship.

He says Stanton is as staunch a friend of mine as ever, and that the President spoke most handsomely of me.

You will perhaps not be surprised to learn that Mr. Cropsey has again gotten himself into trouble. I received to-day a letter from General Hancock, complaining of Mr. Cropsey's account of our recent movement. I told General Hancock to put his complaints in the form of charges and I would have Mr. Cropsey tried by a commission, and abide by its decision.

Hancock leaves us to-morrow, he having a leave of absence, after which he will be assigned to recruiting duty. Humphreys takes his place. The change in my position has rendered it unnecessary to have an officer of Humphreys's rank, as chief-of-staff. I deemed it due to him to suggest his name as Hancock's successor.

Butler has finally succeeded in getting the colored troops with this army, replacing them with an equal number of white troops. He is going to organize a corps of colored troops, and expects to do very great things with them.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *November 27, 1864.*

Yesterday I accompanied General Grant on a visit to General Butler's lines and the famous Dutch Gap Canal, which I had never seen. We had a very pleasant day, remaining with Butler till after dark to witness some experiments with the Greek fire, and getting home about 11 P. M.

I send you an extract from the *Washington Chronicle*, received to-day. It confirms what General Grant told me, and is designed to make people believe that I was already appointed when Sheridan was made. As Forney is closely allied with the powers that be, I take it for granted the above supposition is correct, and that he speaks by authority and for a purpose. I have no objection to this being arranged, so long as the essential point, justice to me, is conceded.

I had a visit this evening from Dr. McEuen who is here to take away his son Charles, who is major of the One Hundred and Ninety-eighth Pennsylvania, and who is now quite sick with fever. The doctor seems in good spirits and not much changed, except being considerable greyer than I used to see him years ago.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 3, 1864.*

I received the two volumes of the *Army and Navy Review* (British) and have read with great interest Captain Chesney's cri-

tique of the battle of Gettysburg. It is decidedly the most impartial account of this battle that I have read, and I think does more justice to my acts and motives than any account by my countrymen, including the grand address of Mr. Everett. What has struck me with surprise is the intimate knowledge of many facts not made very public at the time, such as Slocum's hesitation about reinforcing Howard, Butterfield's drawing up an order to withdraw, and other circumstances of a like nature. This familiarity with details evidences access to some source of information on our side, other than official reports or newspaper accounts. Captain Chesney's facts are singularly accurate, though he has fallen into one or two errors. I was never alarmed about my small arm ammunition, and after Hancock's repulsing the enemy on the 3d, I rode to the left, gave orders for an immediate advance, and used every exertion to have an attack made; but before the troops could be got ready, it became dark. There is no doubt the fatigue and other results of the three days' fighting had produced its effect on the troops and their movements were not as prompt as they would otherwise have been. I have no doubt all his statements about Lee, and his having been overruled, are true. Lee never before or since has exhibited such audacity. I am glad this impartial account by a foreign military critic has been written.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 4, 1864.*

I send you a telegram from the Secretary and my reply, which will show you the vexed question is at last settled. Much of the gratification that ought justly to accompany such a reward has been destroyed by the manner of doing it; so that what might have been a graceful compliment became reduced to a simple act of justice. Well, let us be satisfied with this, and believe it was more a want of knowledge how to do such things than any unfriendly feeling which caused it.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 6, 1864.*

To-night my commission, or rather letter of appointment, as major general in the regular army, to date from August 18th, 1864, has arrived. George¹ has also received the appointment of major, by brevet, for gallantry and meritorious conduct on the campaign. Jim Biddle is also made lieutenant colonel, by brevet, for the same

¹ Son of General Meade.

reasons. These appointments do not give them any increase of pay, but are an acknowledgment of the performance of their duty, and as such are much valued. I think I have reason to be proud that all my recommendations, amounting to two hundred, have been approved.

To-morrow I send off an expedition under Warren, which I trust will result in something decisive, as we are all anxious to have matters on a more settled basis than they now are before the winter.

I feel some anxiety about Thomas in Tennessee. I think I wrote you some time ago, when I first heard of Sherman's movement, that its success would depend on Thomas's capacity to cope with Hood. I think it was expected Sherman's movement would draw Hood back to Georgia, but I anticipated just what he appears to be doing—a bold push for Kentucky, which, if he succeeds in, will far outbalance any success Sherman may have in going from Atlanta to the sea coast. Sherman took with him the largest part of his army, when he did not expect to meet any organized opposition, leaving Thomas with the lesser force to confront and oppose Hood, with the whole of his organized forces. I trust old Thomas will come out all right, but the news is calculated to create anxiety.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 11, 1864.*

Five days ago I sent Warren, with a large force, to destroy the Weldon Railroad, which the enemy continue to use up to a certain point. It was expected Lee would send a force after him, and that we should have some sharp fighting, but to-day Warren is returning, having, undisturbed, effectually destroyed some twenty miles of the road. During Warren's absence we have had a violent storm and the poor men have suffered a great deal, but this is one of the evils of war and must be borne.

To Mr. Henry A. Cram,¹ New York:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 11, 1864.*

I fear you good people confine your efforts to suppress the Rebellion too much to speechifying, voting, and other very safe and easy modes of showing firm determination never to yield; but the essential element to success, namely, turning out to fight, don't seem to be so popular. You will have to stop filling quotas without adding to your armies before you can expect to finish the war. Do you

¹ Brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

know that the last loud call for five hundred thousand men has produced just one hundred and twenty thousand? Of these only about sixty thousand were sent to the field, and the share of my army, one of the largest in the field, was not over fifteen thousand; and of this number the greater part were worthless foreigners, who are daily deserting to the enemy. These are sad facts. I remember you were struck last winter with my telling the Councils of Philadelphia that this army, of whose fighting qualities there seemed to be a doubt, had lost, from official records, from April, 1862, to December, 1863, one hundred thousand, killed and wounded. I have now an official document before me in manuscript, being my report of the campaign from the Rapidan to the 1st of November, and it has a list of casualties showing the enormous number of ninety thousand men, killed, wounded and missing. All this is strictly confidential, as I would be condemned for telling the truth; but when people talk to me of ending the war, I must tell them what war is and its requirements; because you can then see how much prospect there is of finishing it, by forming your own judgment of the adaptation of the means to the end. No, my good friend, this war is not going to be ended till we destroy the armies of the Confederation; and in executing this work we shall have to expend yet millions of treasure and vast numbers of lives. Nothing is gained by postponing the exigencies which must be met. The people must make up their minds not only that the war shall be carried on, they must not only subscribe and cheerfully pay money to any extent, but they must themselves turn out, shoulder their muskets and come to the army, determined to fight the thing out. When I see that spirit, the men coming, and doing the fighting, then I will begin to guess when the war will be closed. Undoubtedly, the South is becoming exhausted; its calmly discussing the expediency of freeing and arming the slaves is positive evidence of its exhaustion and desperation; but unless we take advantage of this by increasing our armies and striking telling blows, it can prolong such a contest as we are now carrying on indefinitely.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my appointment as major general in the regular army. If confirmed by the Senate, it places me fourth in rank in the army—Grant, Halleck and Sherman only being my seniors. Putting me ahead of Sheridan, from the popular position that officer now holds, may create opposition in the Senate; but it is well known my appointment was recommended by the lieutenant general, commanding, approved and determined on

by the President, when Sheridan was my subordinate, commanding my cavalry, and before he had an opportunity of distinguishing himself, as he has since done. No injustice, therefore, has been done him, though when his appointment was announced in the theatrical manner it was, and mine not made, I felt called on to ask an explanation, which resulted in a disavowal to do me injustice, and the appointing me with a date which caused me to rank, as it was originally intended I should. So that, what ought to have been an acceptable compliment, became eventually a simple act of justice due to my remonstrance. Still, I ought to be and am satisfied and gratified, because I think it quite probable we are both of us placed far beyond our merits. I am afraid you will tire of so much personality and think I am greatly demoralized.

To Mrs. George G. Meade :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 16, 1864

I received this evening your letter of the 14th inst., having received day before yesterday the one dated the 12th. I am sorry the good public should have been disappointed in the result of Warren's expedition, but the facts are, as I stated them, he accomplished all that he went for, namely, the destruction of some eighteen miles of the Weldon Railroad.

This passion of believing newspaper and club strategy will I suppose never be eradicated from the American public mind, notwithstanding the experience of four years in which they have from day to day seen its plans and hopes and fears dissipated by facts.

I don't anticipate either Grant or his campaign will be attacked in Congress. In the first place he has too many friends; in the next place, Congress having legislated him into his present position, he can only be removed by their act, and that would be stultifying themselves.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 18, 1864.

I am glad you saw Major Smith and liked him. I found him very intelligent and amiable. I gave him a letter to Oliver Hopkinson, as he wanted to see some duck-shooting; but I believe he found some one in Baltimore who put him in the way of having some sport. I knew that Captain Chesney was the instructor of engineering at

the Military College of Woolwich, but was not aware that his service had been confined to this duty.

We have all been greatly delighted at the good news from Tennessee. Thomas is very much liked by all who know him, and things at one time looked unfavorable for him, it appearing as if he was giving Hood too much time; but it now turns out Old Thom, as we call him, knew what he was about, and has turned the tables completely. Don't you remember, when we were at West Point, meeting his wife, who was at the hotel? He was then in Texas, and she was expecting him home. She was a tall good-natured woman, and was quite civil to us.

I don't believe the bill to cut off the heads of generals will either pass the Senate or be approved by the President. By-the-by, I see the Senate, on motion of Mr. Anthony, of Rhode Island, has directed the Committee on the Conduct of the War to enquire into the Mine fiasco on the 30th of July, and that Burnside has already been summoned to testify. This is a most ill advised step on the part of Burnside and his friends, and can only result in making public the incompetency of that officer. I would, of course, rather not have to appear again before this committee, because they are prejudiced and biased against me, and their examinations are not conducted with fairness. Still, I shall not shrink from the contest.

Grant is still in Washington, though expected back to-morrow. The change of affairs in Tennessee will render his presence there unnecessary.

An expedition sailed the other day from Fortress Monroe, composed of the fleet and a detachment of troops. Grant took these from Butler's army, intending Weitzel should command them; but much to every one's astonishment, Butler insisted on going, and did go, with the expedition.

Mrs. Lyman has sent me a Christmas present of a box of nice cigars.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 20, 1864.*

I have had a hard day to-day. This morning Messrs. Chandler and Harding, of the Senate, and Loan and Julian, of the House, all members of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, made their appearance to investigate the Mine affair. They gave me a list of witnesses to be called, from which I at once saw that their object was to censure me, inasmuch as all these officers were Burnside's friends. They called me before them; when I told them it was out

of my power, owing to the absence of my papers and official documents, to make a proper statement; that this whole matter had been thoroughly investigated by a court ordered by the President; the proceedings of which court and the testimony taken by it, were on file in the War Department, and I would suggest their calling for them as the best mode of obtaining all the facts of the case. I then read them my official report, and after numerous questions by Mr. Loan, who evidently wished to find flaws, I was permitted to leave. Mr. Chandler promised me to apply for the testimony taken by the court, and to let me know the answer given. In case the Department refuse, I shall then submit to the committee a copy of my testimony, as my statement of the case. I asked the committee to call before them General Hunt and Colonel Duane, two of my staff; but these officers came out laughing, and said as soon as they began to say anything that was unfavorable to Burnside, they stopped them and said that was enough, clearly showing they only wanted to hear evidence of one kind. I don't intend to worry myself, but shall just let them take their course and do as they please; but I must try and find some friend in the Senate who will call for the proceedings of the court, and have them published. Mr. Cowan, from Pennsylvania, is the proper person, but I do not know him, and, moreover, do not want to run against Mr. Stanton, so perhaps will wait till I see the Secretary and can talk with him before I take any action.

I presume their object is to get some capital to operate with, to oppose the confirmation of my nomination in the Senate.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *December 23, 1864.*

I have received a letter from the Earl of Fife, in Scotland, asking my good offices for a young kinsman of his, who, he understands, has got a commission in my army. I think I told you some time ago I had a letter from a Mr. Duff, just arrived in New York, asking to be taken on my staff, and sending a letter of introduction from Captain Schenley. I replied he would first have to get a commission, and indicated to him how to go about it. Since then I have not heard from him, but presume, from the Earl of Fife's note, that he has succeeded in getting the commission, but perhaps has changed his mind as to the staff appointment.

Colonel James Biddle has gone on leave. Young Emory has also gone, to get married, and talks of trying to get a commission of colonel in Hancock's new corps. Mason has got a leave, and Lyman I let go also, so that headquarters are a good deal changed.

I think the Confederacy is beginning to shake, and if we only can get the three hundred thousand men the President has called for, and they prove good fighting men, I believe next summer we will conquer a peace, if not sooner. God grant it may be so!¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Tuesday Evening, *January 10, 1865.*

I reached City Point at 6 P. M. to-day. I found the cause of my recall to be as I expected. General Grant had received information of Lee's sending off two divisions of troops, and was, and is, under the impression that it is the commencement of the evacuation of Richmond. Should this prove to be the case, or should Lee materially weaken his force, we will take the initiative, and for this contingency I was required. I explained to General Grant Sergeant's² condition and my earnest desire to remain with him. He expressed regret he had not known all I told him, and promised to let me return to Philadelphia as soon as this affair was settled. As I do not believe Lee is going to give us any chance, I am in hopes it will not be long before I return. I telegraphed you this morning from Fortress Monroe, because we had last night an accident on the bay, which I feared might be exaggerated in the papers, and you alarmed. The night was dark and foggy, and we were run into by a schooner. Fortunately the damage was confined to the upper works, and although four lives were lost, and several bruised, we received no material injury, and our boat continued on. For a time, however, before the extent of the injury was known, there was much alarm and excitement on board our boat, which was unusually crowded, owing to the ice on the Potomac.

The great subject of discussion in the army is the recent relieving of General Butler.³ He was relieved by the President, on Grant's request. The particular cause had not been made public.

It is hardly necessary I should tell you how much I have suffered since I left you. All I can do is earnestly to pray God to have mercy on dear Sergeant and yourself, and to give you strength to bear up under the affliction you are visited with. My heart is too full to write more.

¹ General Meade left camp on December 30, for Philadelphia, where he arrived on December 31. He left Philadelphia on January 9.

² Son of General Meade.

³ General Benjamin F. Butler, commanding the Federal troops, failed to take Fort Fisher, Wilmington, N. C., and withdrew Dec. 25, 1864.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *January 14, 1865.*

I am sorry to hear what you write people say of Grant, because it is unjust, and I do not approve of injustice to any one. Grant undoubtedly has lost prestige, owing to his failure to accomplish more, but as I know it has not been in his power to do more, I cannot approve of unmerited censure, any more than I approved of the fulsome praise showered on him before the campaign commenced. Butler's removal has caused great excitement everywhere. He will have some very powerful influences exerted in his favor, and he will use them efficiently. I see Wilson has moved in the Senate that the Committee on the Conduct of the War enquire and report on the Wilmington fiasco. This is the beginning of a war on Grant.

Gibbon has been assigned to the Twenty-fourth Corps, in Ord's place, who takes Butler's army. This has pleased him very much, and when here to-day to say good-by he was in quite a good humor. I shall probably have to send Webb to Gibbon's division, although I believe he would prefer remaining on my staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *January 17, 1865.*

To-day we have the news that the second expedition has succeeded in taking Fort Fisher, which is a most important and brilliant success. It will, however, have a most damaging effect on Butler's case, and will also materially injure Weitzel's reputation. I must confess I thought Butler's report cleared him in every particular except two. First, he should not have wasted three days, waiting for the enemy, when he knew the fort was weakly garrisoned. Secondly, he should not have left there because an assault was impracticable; and his statement that a siege was not within his instructions, is contradicted by Grant's written instructions, which say that, if a landing is effected, and the work not carried, he is to entrench and hold on. There will, no doubt, be bitter controversy on these points.

Grant has been away for three days, to parts unknown, though I suppose Wilmington.

To Mr. Henry A. Cram,¹ New York:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *January 21, 1865.*

I have received yours of the 18th, with enclosures. The intelligence conveyed in Mr. ——'s letter is not news to me, except that

¹ Brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

I have not been able to believe I was in danger of rejection. I, of course, expected opposition, and that it would be violent and malignant, being based on falsehood and personal hostility; but I did not suppose it would be formidable in numbers, and I have been relying on the truth, my record, and the fact that I was sustained by the Administration and Grant. I have, I know, some friends in the Senate, but they are few in number, being only such as I have accidentally met in the few visits I have paid to Washington. The Military Committee reported favorably on my nomination, but it is a rule of the Senate, when acting on nominations, to lay aside any name as soon as objection is made, so as to avoid discussion until they get through the list of those names to whom there is no objection offered. One man can thus postpone action in any case, and I take it this is all that has yet been done with me. Undoubtedly, when my name came up, either Mr. Wilkinson, of Minnesota, or Anthony, of Rhode Island, has objected, and under the rule I was laid aside. I expect to meet the opposition of the *Tribune* and *Independent* clique, then all such as can be influenced by —, —, —, — and others, each one of whom, of course, has some friends. Whether they can concentrate enough votes to defeat me, remains to be seen. Grant is now in Washington. He promised to see Wilson, the Chairman of the Military Committee (who is friendly), and write a letter, to be read in the Senate, urging my confirmation.¹ One difficulty I have to contend with is that those who are disposed to hit the President, Secretary or Grant, think they are doing so in hitting me. The nomination is, after all, only a compliment, and of no real practical value, as it will not deprive me of my superior rank in the volunteer service or my present command, the largest in the field. It is, nevertheless, mortifying to have a compliment thus detracted from.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *January 22, 1865.*

There is very little going on here. We have had a violent storm of rain. Grant is still away, and I have heard nothing from Markoe Bache, so that I am ignorant of what turn affairs are taking in Washington. I received a letter yesterday from Cram, enclosing me one from a correspondent in Washington, who advises him (Cram) that

¹ For letters mentioned, see Appendix R.

he has been reliably informed that I am likely to be rejected. Still, this may be a street rumor, circulated by those who want this result.

To-day Bishop Lee, of Delaware, held service in the chapel tent at these headquarters, and gave us a very good sermon. He came here with Bishop Janeway, of the Methodist Church, and a Mr. Jones, a lawyer from Philadelphia, who were a commission asking admission into the rebel lines, to visit our poor prisoners in their hands to relieve their spiritual wants; but I believe the Confederate authorities declined.

The Richmond papers are very severe on Davis, and there is every indication of discord among them. I hope to Heaven this will incline them to peace, and that there may be some truth in the many reports in the papers that something is going on!¹

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 1, 1865.*

I reached City Point at twelve o'clock last night, having had a very comfortable journey via Annapolis. We found a good deal of ice in the Chesapeake Bay and considerable in the James River; but to-day has been so mild and pleasant I think the ice will disappear.

From all I can gather, the Secretary's telegram must have been based on something Ord sent to Washington; for Grant did not return till Monday night, and in ignorance of Mr. Stanton's telegram, sent me one himself, yesterday morning.

I found on my arrival, last night, that three distinguished gentlemen, Mr. Alexander Stephens (Vice President of the Confederacy), Mr. R. M. T. Hunter (formerly United States Senator from Virginia), and Mr. Campbell, of Alabama (formerly Judge United States Supreme Court), were in our lines, having been passed in by General Grant, on their expressing a wish to go to Washington. After Grant had admitted them, he received a telegram from Washington directing they be retained outside our lines until a messenger despatched from Washington could arrive. They are now awaiting this messenger. They do not profess to be accredited commissioners, but state they are informal agents, desiring to visit the President and ascertain if any measures are practicable for the termination of the war. I called this morning, with General Grant, on them, and remained after General Grant left, and talked very freely with them. I told them very

¹ General Meade left head-quarters for Philadelphia where he arrived January 28. He left Philadelphia on the 30th.

plainly what I thought was the basis on which the people of the North would be glad to have peace, namely, the complete restoration of the Union and such a settlement of the slavery question as should be final, removing it forever as a subject of strife. Mr. Stephens suggested that, if we could stop fighting, the matter might be discussed. I told him promptly that was entirely out of the question; that we could not stop fighting unless it was for good, and that he might be assured any proposals based on a suspension of hostilities would not be received. Mr. Stephens then said they did not consider the slavery question as so formidable a difficulty, but they feared the difficulty would be to obtain such modification of the old Constitution as would protect the States, in case of other questions arising to produce strife. I said if you mean to propose a reorganization and change in our Government, I don't think you will meet with any success. We are satisfied with our Constitution, and you seem to be, since yours is identically ours, excepting the protection you give to slavery. Mr. Hunter then asked me what we proposed to do with the slaves after freeing them, as it was well known they would not work unless compelled. I replied this was undoubtedly a grave question, but not insurmountable; that they must have labor, and the negroes must have support; between the two necessities I thought some system could be devised accommodating both interests, which would not be so obnoxious as slavery. They then said they thought it a pity this matter could not be left to the generals on each side, and taken out of the hands of politicians. I answered I had no doubt a settlement would be more speedily attained in this way, but I feared there was no chance for this.

We then conversed on general topics. Judge Campbell asked after your family, and Mr. Hunter spoke of Mr. Wise, and said he had brought two letters with him, one of which I herewith enclose.

I judge from my conversation that there is not much chance of peace; I fear we will split on the questions of an armistice and State rights. Still, I hope Mr. Lincoln will receive them and listen to all they have to say, for if it can be shown that their terms are impracticable, the country will be united for the further prosecution of the war. At the same time the selection of three most conservative of Southern men indicates most clearly to my mind an anxiety on the part of Mr. Davis to settle matters if possible. All this I have written you must be confidential, as it would not do to let it be known I had been talking with them, or what I said.

I do most earnestly pray something may result from this movement. When they came within our lines our men cheered loudly, and the soldiers on both sides cried out lustily, "Peace! peace!" This was intended as a compliment, and I believe was so taken by them.

I am sorry I could not stay longer with you, but I don't believe I should have had any satisfaction, as every report brought in would have a recall telegram.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 2, 1865.*

Grant sent me a note this morning, saying a telegram from Washington announced my confirmation yesterday by a heavy majority; thus I have gained another victory, and have found that I really have more friends than I had any idea of.

There have been some English officers here this evening from the frigate *Galatea*, and they have kept me up so late that I cannot write as much as I would wish.

I thought my last visit was, excepting dear Sergeant's¹ sickness, most happy, but I cannot be happy and see my noble boy suffering as he does. I think of him all the time, and feel at times like asking to be relieved, that I may go home and help you nurse him. May God in his infinite mercy restore him to health, is my constant prayer!

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 4, 1865.*

I hear from Washington the vote on my confirmation was thirty-two to five. I have not heard the names of my opponents, but their number is about what I expected, and I have no doubt they are all like Chandler, men whose opposition is rather creditable to you.

As to the Peace Commissioners, I presume their arrival will make a great stir; I have written you what passed between us when I called on them. I understand they afterwards went down to Fortress Monroe, where they met, some say, the President, and others, Mr. Seward. To-day they returned to Richmond, but what was the result of their visit no one knows. At the present moment, 8 P. M., the artillery on our lines is in full blast, clearly proving that at this moment there is no peace. I fear there is not much chance of any

¹ Son of General Meade.

agreement between the contending parties until more decided successes are gained on our side.

I would have liked to have sent a few lines to Johnny Wise by the Commissioners, but they went up the river, and did not pass through my lines.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 7, 1865.*

I have not written you for several days, owing to being very much occupied with military operations. Day before yesterday to prove war existed, whatever might be the discussions about peace, I moved a portion of my army out to the left. The first day the enemy attacked Humphreys, who handsomely repulsed him. The next day (yesterday) Warren attacked the enemy, and after being successful all day, he was towards evening checked and finally compelled to retrace his steps in great disorder. This morning, notwithstanding it was storming violently, Warren went at them again, and succeeded in recovering most of the ground occupied and lost yesterday. The result on the whole has been favorable to our side, and we have extended our lines some three miles to the left. The losses have not been so great as in many previous engagements, and I hear of but few officers killed or severely wounded.

I have been in the saddle each day from early in the morning till near midnight, and was too much exhausted to write.

Colonel Lyman sent me a box, which he said contained books and pickles. I find, on opening it, that there are about a dozen nice books and a box of champagne; so you can tell dear Sergeant he is not the only one that gets good things.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 9, 1865.*

I note you have seen the report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, about the Mine. You have done Grant injustice; he did not testify against me; but the committee has distorted his testimony, my own, and that of every one who told the truth, in order to sustain their censure. When you see all the testimony you will find their verdict is not sustained. Immediately on the appearance of this report Grant sent me a despatch, a copy of which I enclose, and from it you will see what he thinks of the course of the committee, and of Burnside's testimony.¹ I replied to him that, after the

¹ For despatch mentioned, see Appendix S.

acknowledgment of my services by the President, the Secretary and himself, and the endorsement of the Senate, as shown by the large vote in my favor, I thought I could stand the action of the committee, and I felt confident that when the facts and the truth were laid before the public, the report of the committee would prove a more miserable failure than the explosion of the Mine. I, however, asked him to exert his influence to have published the proceedings of the court of inquiry. He has gone to Washington, and I am in hopes he will have this done; I think Burnside has used himself up.

Richmond papers of the 7th, have a message from Davis and the report of the commissioners, from which it appears they required recognition as an independent power, precedent to any negotiations. Of course this was out of the question, and I think Mr. Lincoln's course ought to meet the approval of all true patriots.

We cannot and ought not ever to acknowledge the Confederacy or its independence, and I am surprised they took the trouble to send men into our lines with any such ideas. This conference ought to unite the North to a vigorous prosecution of the war; and the people, if they do not volunteer, should submit cheerfully to the draft. In the same paper, which I send you, is an obituary notice of Beckham, who, it appears, was killed in one of Thomas's fights at Columbia, in Tennessee, he being colonel and chief of artillery to S. D. Lee's Corps. Poor fellow, he and Kirby Smith have both been sacrificed!

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 11, 1865.*

I see the *Tribune*, with its usual malice, charges the recent movement as a failure, and puts the blame on me. I told Grant, before the movement was made, it would be misunderstood and called a failure. But he promised to telegraph to Washington what we intended to do, thinking by this to avoid this misapprehension. His telegram, if he sent one, was never published, nor has any of his or my telegrams to him about the affair been made public. Now, the facts of the case are that I accomplished a great deal more than was designed, and though the Fifth Corps at one time was forced back, yet we repulsed the enemy the day before, had been driving him all that day, and the next day drove him into his works, and on the whole the success was with us. It is rather hard under these circumstances to be abused; but I suppose I must make up my mind to be abused by this set, never mind what happens.

Willie's¹ regiment was in the thickest of the fight and suffered severely, but I believe behaved very well.

There is now here an artist in bronze, of the name of Simmons, who is sculpturing a life-size head of me, of which he intends casting a medallion in bronze. His work is pronounced excellent, and he promises to present you a copy, so you will have your Meade art gallery increased. Grant is still away.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 13, 1865.*

There is no chance for peace now. The South has determined to fight another campaign, and it is to be hoped the North will be equally united, and turn out men to fill up all our present armies and form others at the same time.

Grant returned from Washington to-day. He forgot to say anything about the court of inquiry, so I have to-day telegraphed Mr. Stanton, asking him to have the proceedings published.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 21, 1865.*

I told George² last evening to write to you and acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 17th and 18th, also your telegram of the 20th. The latter I did not understand until this evening, when George received a letter from Jim Biddle, of the 19th, from which I infer Sergeant was considered sinking on Sunday, and finding him better on Monday, you telegraphed. George will leave to-morrow, and will take this. It is impossible for me to go to you, unless I resign my command. If I left for a short time, I should undoubtedly be recalled almost as soon as I reached there. Besides, to be with you for a few days would be but little satisfaction to you; and as to dear Sergeant,³ his condition is such that I presume it does not make much difference who is with him. For your sake I should like to be home, and for my own, but it is God's will, and I must submit.

My duty to you and my children requires I should retain the high command I now have. My reputation and your interests are involved, and I cannot shut my eyes to these considerations, however cruel may be the conclusion that I cannot be at your side and that of my dear boy in this hour of agony and trial. We must all en-

¹ William Sergeant, brother of Mrs. Meade.

² Son of General Meade.

³ Son of General Meade.

deavor to be resigned to God's will. We cannot avert the severe affliction with which it has pleased Him to visit us, doubtless for some good purpose. All we can do is to bear it with humility and resignation, and endeavor to profit by it, in preparing ourselves, as I believe my beloved son is prepared.

Dear Margaret, let me rely on your exhibiting in this, the greatest trial you have had in life, true Christian fortitude. Bear up, in the consciousness that you have ever devoted all the energy of a tender mother's love to check and avert the fatal disease that is carrying off our first born; all that human power could do has been done. Our boy has had warning, and not only his good life, but the consciousness that he knew and was prepared for the change, should sustain us in that parting which had to be encountered one day, for we all must die in time.

George will tell you all about me.¹

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY, 12 M., *February 27, 1865.*

I take advantage of a delay, waiting to see the Secretary, to send you a few lines. I slept nearly all the journey, much to my surprise; but I was grateful it was so, as I feel in consequence much better than if I had lain awake all night.

Hardy Norris was very kind to me this morning, and accompanied me to the hotel, where we breakfasted, after which I came up here.

General Hancock left suddenly yesterday for Western Virginia. This has given rise to rumor of movements of Lee in that direction, but I have heard nothing reliable in this respect. I saw General Hooker this morning at breakfast. He was very affable and civil, and enquired particularly after you, expressing deep sympathy with us in our affliction. This feeling has been manifested by all whom I have met, including Senator Foster, Mr. Odell and others.

I hardly dare think of you in your lonely condition, surrounded by so many associations of our beloved boy. God have mercy on you and send you submission and resignation! No human reasoning

¹ General Meade left headquarters at 12 o'clock noon, on February 21, for Philadelphia, and arrived there at 10 P. M., on the 23d. Before General Meade had reached his home the newspapers announced the death of his son Sergeant on the 21st instant at 11 P. M. General Meade left Philadelphia at 11 P. M. on the 26th for the army, having been hurriedly sent for by the Secretary of War.

can afford you or myself any consolation. Submission to God's will, and the satisfaction arising from the consciousness that we did our duty by him, is all that is left us.

I shall leave here at 3 P. M., and will write to you on my arrival at my headquarters.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *February 28, 1865.*

After writing to you yesterday I saw the Secretary, who was as usual very kind. He apologized for ordering me away when he did, and said he had forgotten dear Sergeant's sickness, and some telegrams coming from Ord he did not like, he thought, in Grant's absence, I had better be there. He wanted me to stay in Washington over night, but I declined, when he directed a special steamer to be got ready to take me at seven in the evening. From the Department I went to the Capitol, where I saw Mr. Cowan and Judge Harris. They both said they would see that the same number of copies of the proceedings of the court of inquiry were ordered to be printed as had been ordered of the committee's report.

I had a pleasant journey, there being no one on board but General Wheaton and myself. We reached City Point at 1 P. M. to-day. I spent two hours with General Grant, reaching my headquarters about half-past four this afternoon.

I find we have not been attacked, and Petersburg has not been evacuated, although I should judge there had been a stampede ever since I left, and that both contingencies had been expected. It has been raining, I am told, nearly all the time I have been absent, and the roads are in an awful condition.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 2, 1865.*

Lyman¹ has returned without waiting for my summons, he becoming nervous for fear some movement of Lee's might precipitate matters before he could get notice, and if the army should move, it might be a difficult matter to join it.

I see by the papers Howard and Schofield have been made brigadier generals in the regular army. This I think injustice to General Warren, whom I recommended some time ago to General Grant for this position.

¹ Theodore Lyman, aide-de-camp to General Meade.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 4, 1865.*

To-day's *Chronicle* has part of the opinion of the court of inquiry, which I suppose will be published in the Philadelphia papers. It has made quite a sensation in the army, as it censures Burnside, Willcox, Ferrero and a Colonel Bliss. But few persons understand the allusion in the last sentence.

Senator Harris told me that, after I was confirmed, he received a letter from Burnside, saying he was glad of it, and that I deserved it. I told Senator Harris I had no personal feeling against Burnside, and no desire to injure him.

Deserters still continue to come in, there being seventy-five yesterday, forty with arms. There are, however, no indications of an immediate evacuation either of Petersburg or Richmond, and the great fight may yet be fought out in this vicinity. There is nothing new in the camp, except you may tell George¹ the Third Infantry has reported, and is doing guard duty at headquarters in place of the "red legs."

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 8, 1865.*

Yesterday about 11 A. M., Mr. and Mrs. George Harding, with a party of ladies and gentlemen, arrived at these headquarters. Mr. Harding had telegraphed me from City Point he was coming. I took them to see the camps and works, and turned out some of the troops for them to see. Then brought them back here and gave them a lunch, with some of Lyman's champagne, and sent them back to City Point, quite delighted with their trip and all they saw. The day was a beautiful one and the roads in fine order. Mrs. Grant accompanied them and seemed as much pleased as the rest. I was glad to have it in my power to be civil to Mr. Harding, as some slight return for all he has done for me.

You will have heard of Sheridan's success in the Valley, which I trust will be continued. We are now looking with interest for news from Sherman, and to know what force the enemy have been able to collect to confront him.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 12, 1865.*

Yesterday General Grant with a small party came out here and I had a review for them. In the evening General Grant was pre-

¹ Son of General Meade.

sented at City Point with the gold medal voted him by Congress, and I went to City Point to the presentation. To-day Pendleton Watmough and young Parker (Cortlandt's nephew), both of whom command gunboats in the James, came to see me, and I took them around the lines. Your brother Willie came in whilst they were here, looking very well and in good spirits.

We are quiet and nothing going on.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 13, 1865.*

I wish you would think favorably of my proposition to take a trip to the army. I think it would arouse you and distract your mind.

You do not do justice quite to the court of inquiry. The finding is a complete vindication of my part in the operation. I enclose a slip from the *Army and Navy Journal*, which gives in full the "Finding of the Court," the papers having only published that portion in which individual officers are censured by name.¹ On reading this you will see the court states that, had my orders been carried out, success was certain, and that failure was due to the neglect of my orders by Major General Burnside and others. It is true the court might have amplified this much more than it did, and not ignored altogether Burnside's extraordinary course, in the withdrawal of his command, which was the cause of our great loss. The Richmond papers say Hampton has whipped Kilpatrick, and we have a despatch from Sheridan reporting the occupation of Charlottesville and destruction of the James River Canal.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 16, 1865.*

To-day Mr. Stanton and lady, with a select party, among whom was the French Minister, visited the army and went the rounds, witnessing among other things a review of Warren's Corps. Yesterday we had a party of Senators, with their families, so that we have had junketings almost every day for a week past.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 26, 1865.*

Your visit seems so like a dream I can hardly realize you have been here.

The orderly who took Meta McCall's saddle down says he arrived just in time to put it on board, so I presume you started soon after

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix T.

12 M. To-day is a fine day, without wind, and I trust you will have a pleasant journey up the Potomac and get safe home.

After I arrived here, the President and party came about 1 P. M. We reviewed Crawford's Division, and then rode to the front line and saw the firing on Wright's front, at the fort where you were, where a pretty sharp fight was going on. Indeed, Humphreys and Wright were fighting till eight o'clock, with very good results, taking over one thousand prisoners from the enemy, and inflicting heavy losses in killed and wounded. The day turned out to be a very successful one, we punishing the enemy severely, taking nearly three thousand prisoners and ten battle flags, besides the *morale* of frustrating and defeating his plans.

Mrs. Lincoln spoke very handsomely of you and referred in feeling terms to our sad bereavement. The President also spoke of you, and expressed regret that your visit should have been so abruptly terminated. I suppose Mrs. Hopkinson and yourself will have great fun in recalling the incidents of your trip. Altogether, your expedition was very successful, and I am very glad you came.

I expect we shall have stirring times before long. The fighting yesterday proved the enemy has still some spirit left in him, and Lee, having once begun, is likely to try his hand again; and if he don't, I suppose we shall have to take the matter in hand.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 29, 1865.*

To-day we have made a movement to our left, and I am to-night in new headquarters, having abandoned the pleasant quarters you were in.

The enemy attacked Griffin's Division about 5 P. M., but were handsomely repulsed. I regret, however, to announce the death of Dr. McEwen's son, who fell in this affair. I have telegraphed Jim Biddle to announce this event to the doctor, for whom I feel deeply.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 1, 1865.*

We have been moving and fighting the last three days, and I have not gone to bed till after one and two in the morning, and then up at five. We have had considerable fighting with the enemy out of his works, into which we have invariably driven him; but when there he is too strong for us, and the farther we go round to our left, we still find a formidable entrenched line. I think, however, we will

this time reach the Southside Railroad, and if we do so, I should not be surprised if Lee evacuated his Petersburg lines and withdrew north of the Appomattox. Should he remain in them, he will have to stretch out so far that we may find a chance to pierce him.

Your brother Willie was wounded yesterday, not dangerously, as I telegraphed you. He left this morning, and I sent George¹ to accompany him to City Point, and if necessary to Philadelphia. Jim Biddle arrived yesterday.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 3, 1865.*

The telegraph will have conveyed to you, long before this reaches you, the joyful intelligence that Petersburg and Richmond have fallen, and that Lee, broken and dispirited, has retreated towards Lynchburg and Danville. We have had three glorious days, the fighting not so severe as much we have done before, but in the results. We are now moving after Lee, and if we are successful in striking him another blow before he can rally his troops, I think the Confederacy will be at an end.

George¹ is quite well, having left his uncle at City Point, where it was deemed advisable he should stop for awhile. Willie² was doing very well, and is not considered in any danger.

Markoe Bache arrived this morning just in time to march into Petersburg with us.

The strong demonstration we made on Lee's right caused him so to attenuate his lines that, notwithstanding their strength, we broke through his left, and poured in such a force that he had to fly to save himself. He was fortunate in keeping us out of the town till dark, which enabled him to get over the Appomattox what remained of his army. The last estimate of our prisoners amounted to fifteen thousand, and deserters and stragglers are being picked up by the thousands. Let us hope the war will soon be over.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 7, 1865.*

Though late at night, I seize the time to send you a few lines. I don't know when I last heard or wrote to you, for besides the battles and marches of the last ten days, I have been nearly all the time quite under the weather with a severe bilious catarrh, taking an in-

¹ Son of General Meade.

² Brother of Mrs. Meade.

termittent form. Thanks to my powerful constitution, and the good care of my attending physician, together with the excitement of the scenes I have passed through, I have managed not to give up, but to be on hand each day. It is impossible for me to give you a detailed account of all our operations; suffice it to say, they have been brilliantly successful, beyond the most reasonable expectations. Richmond is ours, and Lee's army flying before us, shattered and demoralized. Yesterday we took over ten thousand prisoners and five generals, among them Lieutenant General Ewell, and Custis Lee, Charley Turnbull's friend. I hear these officers virtually admit the contest over, and say they believe Lee is prepared to surrender, or at least to disband his army.

We are now at Farmville, on the Appomattox, Lee having started for Danville; but we cut him off and forced him back towards Lynchburg. I am happy to tell you that I have reliable intelligence from Confederate officers that neither Mr. Wise¹ nor his sons are dead.

George is quite well, and has, with Lyman and Dr. McParlin, taken good care of me. Major Smyth joined us just as we were moving, and has had a grand opportunity to see everything.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, *April 10, 1865.*

The telegram will have announced to you the surrender of Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. This I consider virtually ends the war. I have been to-day in the rebel camp; saw Lee, Longstreet, and many others, among them Mr. Wise. They were all affable and cordial, and uniformly said that, if any conciliatory policy was extended to the South, peace would be at once made. Mr. Wise looked old and feeble, said he was very sick, and had not a mouthful to eat. I secured him the privilege of an ambulance to go home in, and on my return to camp immediately despatched George² with an ambulance load of provisions to him. He enquired very affectionately after yourself, your mother and all the family.

The officers and men are to be paroled and allowed to go to their homes, where they all say they mean to stay. Lee's army was reduced to a force of less than ten thousand effective armed men. We had at least fifty thousand around him, so that nothing but madness would have justified further resistance.

I have been quite sick, but I hope now, with a little rest and

¹ Henry A. Wise, brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade. ² Son of General Meade.

quiet, to get well again. I have had a malarious catarrh, which has given me a great deal of trouble. I have seen but few newspapers since this movement commenced, and I don't want to see any more, for they are full of falsehood and of undue and exaggerated praise of certain individuals who take pains to be on the right side of the reporters. Don't worry yourself about this; treat it with contempt. It cannot be remedied, and we should be resigned. I don't believe the truth ever will be known, and I have a great contempt for History. Only let the war be finished, and I returned to you and the dear children, and I will be satisfied.

Our casualties have been quite insignificant in comparison with the results. I don't believe in all the operations since we commenced on the 29th that we have lost as many men as we did on that unfortunate day, the 31st July, the day of the Petersburg mine.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., *April 12, 1865.*

Your indignation at the exaggerated praise given to certain officers, and the ignoring of others, is quite natural. Still, I do not see how this evil is to be remedied, so long as our people and press are constituted as they are now. I have the consciousness that I have fully performed my duty, and have done my full share of the brilliant work just completed; but if the press is determined to ignore this, and the people are determined, after four years' experience of press lying, to believe what the newspapers say, I don't see there is anything for us but to submit and be resigned. Grant I do not consider so criminal; it is partly ignorance and partly selfishness which prevents his being aware of the effects of his acts. With Sheridan it is not so. His determination to absorb the credit of everything done is so manifest as to have attracted the attention of the whole army, and the truth will in time be made known. His conduct towards me has been beneath contempt, and will most assuredly react against him in the minds of all just and fair-minded persons.

Grant has left us on a visit to Richmond and Washington. My army is being assembled around this place, where I presume we will await events in North Carolina, and go to Danville, and farther South if it should be deemed necessary. The prevailing belief is that Johnston, on learning the destruction of Lee's army, will either surrender or disband his. It is hardly probable he will attempt to face Sherman and us.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., *April 13, 1865.*

Yesterday, as soon as I reached here, where there is a telegraph, I telegraphed to City Point to enquire about Willie,¹ and received a reply from the medical officer in charge of the hospital that Willie had left the day before for Washington, doing well, the ball having been extracted. You can therefore imagine how shocked I was about midnight to get a despatch from Sandy Dallas, at Washington, stating Willie had died on the passage. I presume he must have died of hemorrhage, or some of those secondary causes that suddenly occur in gun-shot wounds. What a dreadful shock for his poor wife and your mother, and how it will mar the exultation of our recent victories!

Willie had established a high character for himself, and was doing so well that it seems hard he should be thus suddenly taken off. My God, what misery this dreadful war has produced, and how it comes home to the doors of almost every one!

I have written you fully, urging on you patience and resignation. Popular fame is at best but ephemeral, and so long as one has a clear conscience that he has done his duty, he can look, or at least should look, with indifference on the clamor of the vulgar.

I have received a very kind letter from Cortlandt Parker, and I enclose you one received to-day from Mr. Jay, of New York, so that I am not entirely without friends, though the few I have render them the more valuable. But, with or without friends, we ought to be happy so long as God spares our lives and blesses us with health, and our consciences are clear that we have done all we could. I trust we will soon have peace, and then I may be permitted to return to you and the children. This will compensate me for all I have gone through.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 16, 1865.*

I received to-day your letter of the 12th, giving an account of the Union League serenade, and of your having learned of the death of Willie. I am glad for your sake some notice has been taken of my services.

As to Willie, I have written to you how shocked I was to hear of his death. This will, of course, be a terrible blow to his poor wife and the dear children. Your mother also, at her time of life, will necessarily feel it deeply.

¹ Brother of Mrs. Meade.

Yesterday we were shocked by the announcement of the assassination of the President, Secretary and Assistant Secretary of State. I cannot imagine the motives of the perpetrators of these foul deeds, or what they expect to gain. The whole affair is a mystery. Let us pray God to have mercy on our country and bring us through these trials.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 18, 1865.*

Day before yesterday I sent Captain Emory to Richmond to see after his relatives. I have to-day a telegram from him, stating he had reached Richmond and found our friends all well.

I have heard nothing from General Grant since he left here, and am in complete ignorance of what is going to be done with this army. I note what you say about public opinion in Philadelphia and New York, but if you saw the *Herald* of the 14th, you ought to be satisfied with what is there said of the feeling of the army towards me.¹ So long as the soldiers appreciate my services, I am indifferent to the opinion of politicians and newspaper editors.

I see the Radicals are down on Grant for the terms he granted Lee. This I expected, but I trust they are in a miserable minority, and that the country will sustain him.

I send you a copy of an order I published announcing the death of the President. It has been well received. I also enclose a letter from an anonymous friend, which was accompanied by an elegant pair of gauntlets.

"Order" mentioned in last letter:

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 16, 1865.*

General Orders, No. 15.

The Major General Commanding announces to the Army that official intelligence has been received of the death, by assassination, of the President of the United States. The President died at 7.22 on the morning of the 15th instant.

By this Army, this announcement will be received with profound sorrow, and deep horror and indignation. The President, by the active interest he ever took in the welfare of this Army, and by his presence in frequent visits, especially during the recent operations, had particularly endeared himself to both officers and soldiers, all of whom regarded him as a generous friend.

¹ For article mentioned, see Appendix U.

An honest man, a noble patriot, and sagacious statesman has fallen! No greater loss, at this particular moment, could have befallen our Country. Whilst we bow with submission to the unfathomable and inscrutable decrees of Divine Providence, let us earnestly pray that God, in His infinite mercy, will so order, that this terrible calamity shall not interfere with the prosperity and happiness of our beloved Country!

GEO. G. MEADE,
Major General Commanding.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *April 20, 1865.*

I am glad you were so prompt in putting your house in mourning for the loss of the President, and I am also glad to see the press in Philadelphia take so much notice of you.

Lyman,¹ much to my sorrow and regret, leaves me to-day, he considering the destruction of Lee's army as justifying his return home. Lyman is such a good fellow, and has been so intimately connected personally with me, that I feel his separation as the loss of an old and valued friend.

I have had for the last two days as guest at my headquarters Mr. Charles J. Faulkner, late Minister to France. He is on his way to Richmond, to assist in bringing back Virginia to the Union. He acknowledges the Confederacy destroyed, is in favor of a convention of the people to rescind the ordinance of secession, abolish slavery, and ask to be received into the Union. This is in my judgment the best course to be pursued. Mr. Faulkner goes from here to Richmond. We also had yesterday the arrival of a Confederate officer from Danville, who reported the rumored surrender of Johnston, and the flight of Jeff. Davis to the region beyond the Mississippi, from whence I have no doubt he will go into Mexico, and thence to Europe.

To Mr. Henry A. Cram,² New York:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., *April 22, 1865.*

I shall be most delighted to pay Katharine³ and yourself a visit in Irving Place, but the prospect of such felicity does not seem very near.

¹ Theodore Lyman, aide-de-camp to General Meade.

² Brother-in-law of Mrs. Meade.

³ Wife of Mr. Cram.

I am at present very much demoralized by a recent order which places me and my army under the command of General Halleck, who has been transferred from Washington to Richmond. In order to make General Halleck's removal from Washington acceptable to him, and appear necessary to the public, the services of myself and army are ignored, and this indignity put upon us; and this by Grant, who wrote the letter he did last winter, and who *professes* the warmest friendship. All this *entre nous*.

We of the army have done our work; the military power of the Rebellion is shattered. It remains for statesmen, if we have any, to bring the people of the South back to their allegiance and into the Union. How and when this will be accomplished, no one can tell. In the meantime, I presume our armies will have to occupy the Southern States. I am myself for conciliation, as the policy most likely to effect a speedy reunion. If we are going to punish treason, as perhaps strict justice would demand, we shall have to shed almost as much blood as has already been poured out in this terrible war. These are points, however, for others to adjust.

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKESVILLE, VA., April 23, 1865.

An order came yesterday constituting Virginia into the Military Division of the James, assigning Major General Halleck to the command, and putting myself and the Army of the Potomac under him.

This is the most cruel and humiliating indignity that has been put upon me. (It is General Grant's work, and done by him with a full knowledge of my services and the consideration due to them, all of which have been ignored by him to suit his convenience). The order is a perfectly legitimate one, and to which, as a soldier, I have no right to make any objection, General Halleck being my senior in the regular army. I understand, however, the whole affair. After the assassination of the President, General Grant, who had previously determined to return here, made up his mind to remain in Washington. He wished to find a place for Halleck. His first order assigned Halleck to the command of the Department of Virginia, in Ord's place, sending Ord to South Carolina. I presume Halleck demurred at this, as a position not equal to what he was entitled. At Halleck's remonstrance, and to render acceptable his removal from Washington,

this order was rescinded, and the order issued making the Military Division of the James, and putting both Ord and myself under him. I feel quite confident that, if I had been in Washington and my remonstrances could have been heard, I either would have frustrated this plan, or have been provided for in some way more consistent with my past services, but *les absens ont toujours tort* was fully illustrated in this instance, and there is nothing left me but the submission which a good soldier should always show to the legitimate orders of his superiors. I, however, now give up Grant.

I am glad Lyman called to see you. He is an honest man and a true friend. He has a healthy mental organization, which induces him to look on all matters in the most favorable light.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., April 24, 1865.

I received last evening your letter of the 20th, and was sorry to learn you had so narrowly escaped being mobbed, particularly after the credit you had gained for being the first to display mourning. It certainly was very culpable on the part of —, after taking upon himself the duty of decorating your house, to neglect it as he did. In such times of excitement some allowance must be made for vulgar and ignorant people, and you must be over careful to avoid giving offense, whether justly or otherwise.

Major Henry's letter is very handsome and very creditable to him; I return it herewith. Some one had sent me an extract from the proceedings of the City Councils, containing Mr. Gratz's letter to Councils, and the resolution accepting Mr. Gratz's gift. No letter came with this printed slip, but it posted me up in the great honor that had been conferred upon me.

Some days ago the Ninth Corps was detached from this army and ordered to Washington—destination unknown (but surmised to be Missouri). Yesterday the Sixth Corps was ordered to Danville, to be there under Sheridan's orders; so that I am reduced to two corps—one the Fifth, guarding the railroad from here to Petersburg; the other, the Second, at this point. I presume one of them will soon be ordered away, probably the Second, to guard the railroad from here to Danville. Being reduced then to one corps, I trust the common sense of my superiors will see the absurdity of calling me the commander of an army, and that I shall be relieved and some other duty assigned me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., April 27, 1865.

I have received your letters of the 22d and 23d insts. Such exhibitions as are now being made of the body of Mr. Lincoln, are always in my judgment in bad taste, and are never solemn or impressive. Still, as public ceremonies, I suppose they always will be, as they ever have been, necessary for the masses of people.

I cannot understand Sherman's course.¹ I am very sorry for Sherman, no one can dispute that his services have been pre-eminent, and though he may have erred in judgment, and have mistaken the temper of the North, he is entitled to the considerations due to his past services, which should have shielded him from having his motives and loyalty impugned. I am curious to see whether Grant, when he joins him, will smother him as he did me.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BURKSVILLE, VA., May 1, 1865.

We are under marching orders for Alexandria, *via* Richmond, so the grand military division of the James, including the Army of the Potomac, has just existed about one week. I presume this army is ordered to Alexandria, as a preliminary measure to its disbandment.

I shall leave here to-morrow for Richmond, and after spending a day or two there, putting the army *en route* for Alexandria, shall proceed to that point, which I expect to reach before the middle of the month. I will write you from Richmond.

George² and myself are both well, and greatly delighted with the idea of getting so near home as Washington, with the hope that, whatever turns up, I shall be able to spend a little time at home.

RICHMOND, VA., May 3, 1865.

I arrived here about 11 A. M. to-day, in advance of the army, to make arrangements for its passing through this city. It is to have a triumphal march through, and be received by all the troops now in the city.

As soon after getting here as I could arrange business matters, I went to see Nene Wise, whom I found living with Mrs. Dr. Garnett.

¹ General W. T. Sherman's terms for the surrender of General Johnston were repudiated by the authorities at Washington.

² Son of General Meade.

At Mrs. Garnett's I saw Mrs. Tully Wise, who was all last summer in Columbia, South Carolina, and there met Mrs. Alfred Huger with Mariamne's¹ children. She says the children are all sweet, and that Mr. and Mrs. Huger are devoted to them, but that Mr. Huger has lost everything, and is now very poor, that he is old and infirm, and will not probably live long. She says Mr. Huger's house in Charleston was burned in the great fire of 1862, and everything in it destroyed, all the old pictures, and all the clothes, jewels and everything belonging to Mariamne's children. Mr. Huger at this time was Postmaster of Charleston, and used to come up and spend Sundays at Columbia. Mrs. Wise had not heard from them since Sherman's occupation.

I have already written you that I expect to be in Washington by the 18th inst. It is generally believed that after the army is assembled in Washington it will be disbanded. In that case I shall undoubtedly be allowed some relaxation before again being assigned to duty, and will then have an opportunity of being home for awhile.

RICHMOND, VA., *May 5, 1865.*

It was intended we should march through the city to-day, but the condition of the men after their long march from Burksville, and the appearance of the weather, threatening a storm, the march was postponed till to-morrow. I think it will take us from eight to ten days to march across. I hope to be in Alexandria by the fourteenth or fifteenth. I have not seen anyone here except the Wises and Tuckers. I have heard of a great many people here whom I formerly knew, but besides my occupation, I have been indisposed to visit any of them, because I know they all feel bitter, and many are really in distress, which I am powerless to relieve.

Last evening Markoe Bache, who had been to see his friend Custis Lee, was told by him that his father, General Lee, would be glad to see me. I called there to-day and had a long talk with him. I endeavored to convince him of the expediency and propriety of his taking the oath of allegiance, not only on his own account, but for the great influence his example would have over others. General Lee said he had personally no objections, that he was willing, and intended to submit to the Constitution and laws of the United States, but that now he was a paroled prisoner of war, and he was unwilling to change

¹ Sister of Mrs. Meade and wife of Thomas B. Huger, C. S. A.

his present status until he could form some idea of what the policy of the Government was going to be towards the people of the South. I argued with him that it was impossible for the Government to decide how they were to be treated, until it was satisfied they had returned to their allegiance, and that the only practicable way of showing this was by taking the oath. He admitted that the military power of the Confederacy had been destroyed, and that practically there was now no Confederate Government. The Government of the United States was the only one having power and authority, and those who designed living under it, should evince their determination by going through this necessary form. He also spoke a great deal of the *status* of the negro, which is really the great and formidable question of the day; but I did not devise any very practicable suggestions. I had a long and interesting talk, and left him, really sad to think of his position, his necessities, and the difficulties which surround him.

Lyman has sent me a Boston paper, with a very excellent article written by himself, which I will send you.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May 12, 1865.*

I reached here last evening in time to pitch camp on the banks of the Potomac. To-day I have been in town at the Department, and waiting to see General Grant, who has been all day before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. I have not yet seen him, so am not able to give you any news. From what I gather, I infer the armies are to be disbanded at once. The review or parade has been talked about, but there appears to be nothing settled, and I rather think it will fall through. I have received your letters up to the one dated the ninth.

We had a delightful march from Richmond; some rain towards the end of the journey, which impeded our progress.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *May 18, 1865.*

I depended on the boys to tell you all the news. You will see by the papers that the great review is to come off next Tuesday. On that day, the Army of the Potomac, consisting of the cavalry, Ninth, Fifth and Second Corps, will, under my command, march through Washington and be reviewed by the President. To-day's paper contains an announcement of the fact, in a telegram from Mr. Stanton to General Dix, which it is expected will bring the whole North to Washington.

I have heard nothing further about the proposed new duties, or about going to West Point. The order reducing the armies is published, and I suppose the reduction will take place immediately after the review, so that it will not be long before the question is settled.

PART VII

NARRATIVE FROM THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR TO GENERAL MEADE'S DEATH

1865-1872

A FEW days after the date of the preceding letter General Meade was joined in camp by his whole family, who had come to be present in Washington at the Grand Review, on May 23d, of the Army of the Potomac, preceding the disbandment of the troops.

The principal reviewing stand was erected in front of the White House and occupied by the President, the members of the Cabinet, and other distinguished persons. At nine o'clock the head of the column, led by General Meade, who commanded in person, accompanied by his Staff, started from the Capitol, followed by the Cavalry Corps, Major-General Merritt, commanding; the Provost-Marshal-General's Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General Macey, commanding; the Engineer Brigade, Brigadier-General Benham, commanding; the Ninth Army Corps, Major-General Parke, commanding (to this last corps was attached a division of the Nineteenth Corps, commanded by Brigadier-General Dwight); the Fifth Army Corps, Brevet Major-General Griffin, commanding; and the Second Army Corps, Major-General Humphreys, commanding; and marched through Pennsylvania Avenue, which was thronged with people gathered from all parts of the country to witness the spectacle of veterans returning from the war.

The weather proved propitious, and the spectacle of sixty-five thousand men marching, who constituted that grand old army with whose deeds they had been so long familiar, awakened an enthusiasm among the people, which found vent in the tumultuous cheering of an ovation that knew no bounds. The troops, having marched through the avenue, then returned to their encampment on the opposite side of the Potomac.

On the following day the Armies of Georgia and Tennessee, under

command of General Sherman, were reviewed in the same manner and had a similar reception.

For some time after this event General Meade was busily engaged in issuing the necessary orders for the disbandment of the troops of his army. In consequence he was still obliged to remain in the field, making only one short visit to Philadelphia, where, on June 10th, he participated in the reception and parade of the returned Philadelphia regiments.

On June 28th, he issued the following farewell address to the army:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 28, 1865.*

Soldiers:

This day, two years, I assumed command of you, under the order of the President of the United States. To-day, by virtue of the same authority, this army ceasing to exist, I have to announce my transfer to other duties, and my separation from you.

It is unnecessary to enumerate here all that has occurred in these two eventful years, from the grand and decisive Battle of Gettysburg, the turning point of the war, to the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House. Suffice it to say that history will do you justice, a grateful country will honor the living, cherish and support the disabled, and sincerely mourn the dead.

In parting from you, your commanding general will ever bear in memory your noble devotion to your country, your patience and cheerfulness under all the privations and sacrifices you have been called upon to endure.

Soldiers! having accomplished the work set before us, having vindicated the honor and integrity of our Government and flag, let us return thanks to Almighty God for His blessing in granting us victory and peace; and let us sincerely pray for strength and light to discharge our duties as citizens, as we have endeavored to discharge them as soldiers.

GEO. G. MEADE,
Major General, U. S. A.

Thus closed the career of the grandest army that this continent has ever seen. When its history shall have been one day faithfully and well written it will be seen that, with all due justice to the other heroic armies of the North, its record stands pre-eminent as the most heroic of them all. It was engaged in more difficult campaigns, fought

more hard-contested battles, and suffered more severely than any other army. If, with the double task of guarding the capital of the nation, and of confronting the flower of the Southern armies, it was not always successful, it never failed to respond to the call of duty, and cheerfully to bear the dangers, hardships, and fatigues incidental to active campaigning even under the most trying circumstances of leadership.

It was in existence within two months of four years. General Meade was continuously with it from within a few days of its organization to its final disbandment. He was absent from it, during those four years, but one hundred and nine days, forty-two of which he was recovering from a wound. He was present in every campaign of the army, and in all its engagements, save three. He was its commander for more than half the term of its existence, and as such fought and gained in the greatest battle of the war its most important and signal victory.

Upon the disbandment of the large armies and the assignment of the general officers to new fields of duty, General Meade was given the command of the Military Division of the Atlantic, headquarters at Philadelphia. No one in all those great armies hailed the return of peace more sincerely than he. Rejoicing at the successful issue of the war, and at his return from the weighty care inseparable from the command of a large army, he fully appreciated the opportunity of once more returning to his family, separation from which had been one of his severest trials.

Upon his return to Philadelphia he was received with the greatest distinction. Public and private receptions and entertainments were given in his honor, and wherever he went on tours to inspect his command, he was warmly greeted and similar honors were paid to him by a grateful people. At the invitation of citizens of Boston he visited that city in July, and was present at the laying of the corner-stone of Memorial Hall, at Harvard College, erected in memory of her graduates who had fallen in the war. Among other distinguished marks of appreciation shown him at this time was the conferring upon him at the commencement exercises of the college, through its president, Dr. Hill, the honorary degree of LL.D.

In obedience to instructions from the War Department, General Meade made in August of this year an extended tour of inspection through Virginia and North and South Carolina, which States then formed part of his command.

As part of his duty he examined carefully into the working of both the civil and military governments. His report on the subject is a clear and comprehensive statement of the condition of affairs as he found them, coupled with his views and suggestions on many of the complicated questions which had arisen in the Southern States, owing to the changed circumstances immediately following the war. He personally conferred with the provisional governors of those States, and in his report refers to the harmonious action then existing between the civil and military authorities. After expressing his approval of the discretion of the three department commanders, Generals Gilmore, Ruger, and Terry, he concluded as follows: "I have to report the condition of affairs as on the whole satisfactory. The people are slowly recovering from the shock of war. Everywhere the most earnest professions of submission to the result of the war were made, and I am disposed to give credit to their assertions within the limits of what may be presumed natural. But it must be remembered that it is not natural to expect a sudden revolution in the ideas in which a people have been always educated. The great change in the labor question will require time for both races to realize and conform to, and until this period arrives, it will undoubtedly be necessary to retain such military control as will compel mutual justice from both parties. This control should be exercised with judgment and discretion, and every effort made to convince both races that it is exercised only for their mutual benefit. Instructions were given to this effect to Department Commanders, and I am satisfied there need be no apprehension of any improper interference of the military with the civil authorities."

In March, 1866, General Meade was selected as one of a board to make recommendations for brevets to the grade of general officers in the regular army, the other members of the board being Major-Generals W. T. Sherman and George H. Thomas. The board met at St. Louis, Missouri, and remained in session for about two weeks, during which time General Meade's stay in the city was made as agreeable as possible. He met many old friends who received him most cordially, and many entertainments were given to these three distinguished guests.

It was while absent on this duty that General Meade received intimation of the projected invasion of Canada by the Fenians, an organization just then looming into prominence and composed principally of old soldiers of both North and South. The board having

adjourned and he returned to Philadelphia, he found the threats of the Fenians becoming more and more serious, and the report went that they were assembling at various points on the Canadian frontier, within the limits of his command. In consequence, under instructions from Lieutenant-General Grant, orders were issued to the commanding officers of that district, "to use all vigilance to prevent armed or hostile forces or organizations from leaving the United States to enter British Provinces." Receiving information that quite a large force of Fenians had rendezvoused at Eastport, Maine, the general proceeded early in April to the place, picking up on his way one or two companies of artillery to reinforce the small garrison at Fort Sullivan, and on his arrival found collected about three hundred Fenians and the place filled with all sorts of rumors as to their intentions. After a careful disposition of his small force, and the adoption of every other precaution to prevent any hostile demonstration, he at once placed himself in communication with the leaders of the Fenian expedition and gave them clearly to understand that any breach by them of the neutrality laws would be instantly followed by the arrest of every one of them. Owing to these prompt and energetic measures, it became evident to the "Liberators of Ireland," as they styled themselves, that any hostile demonstration on their part would be defeated, and in a short time their forces gradually melted away and disappeared from that part of the country.

While on this tour of duty General Meade visited Calais, Maine. Here, as well as at Eastport, he had reason to be gratified at the honorable reception accorded him by the citizens. The general here availed himself of being in the vicinity to pay his respects to his friend, Major-General Sir Hastings Doyle, of the British Army, who was in command of the lower provinces of Canada, and in that capacity watching the movements of the proposed invaders.

During the general's stay in Maine he caught a severe cold and was threatened with pneumonia, leading to his detention in Eastport for some weeks, to be confined to his bed. Thanks, however, to the medical skill of Assistant Surgeon Milhau, of his staff, and the considerate attention of many of the citizens, the attack was warded off, and he returned safely to his home in Philadelphia.

In June of the same year, whilst at West Point, New York, where he had gone to command the escort at the funeral of Lieutenant-General Scott, General Meade received notice from both State and War Departments that the Fenians were again collecting on the

Niagara frontier, and was instructed to take measures to prevent the carrying out of their purposed invasion of Canada.

This second threatened invasion of the soil of a neighboring and friendly power was a much more serious affair than the one at Eastport had been, and called for the exercise of the utmost judgment so to conduct matters that, while preventing any breach of the neutrality laws, all risk of collision of our own forces with the Fenians should, if possible, be avoided. The government at Washington was solicitous that these troubles should be speedily adjusted so as to remove any cause of difference between the United States and Great Britain. At the same time that it was desirable this should be accomplished, the importance of not losing sight of the fact that the Fenians included a large number of voters from the United States, of a class which represented an important factor in the petty politics of the country, was so evident to the authorities at Washington that they were content to leave in the hands of a man who was no aspirant for political preferment the delicate task of dealing with them, and to commit the whole management and responsibility of the affair to his discretion.

General Meade at once proceeded to Buffalo, where he found that a body of the invaders had crossed to the Canadian shore, had had a skirmish with the Canadian militia, and in endeavoring to recross had been captured by the United States steamer *Michigan*, their arms taken from them, and they held subject to the orders of the civil authorities. After taking due precautions to prevent any recurrence of this kind, he hastened to Ogdensburg, New York, at which place, and at St. Albans, Vermont, it was reported that the Fenians had collected in large force and that their chief demonstration was to be made.

The great extent of frontier to be guarded, in view of the small means at his disposal, rendered it impossible for General Meade to do more than make a show of force. Under the circumstances, he recommended the government to proclaim martial law, and to empower him to call for troops upon the States in which the disturbances were threatened. These suggestions were not fully complied with by the government, but finally the President issued a proclamation, warning all good citizens against taking part in this unlawful proceeding of invasion, and authorizing General Meade to employ the land and naval forces of the United States, and also the militia, to frustrate the intention of the expeditions. This was exactly what General Meade was already doing.

The general had found, on his arrival at Ogdensburg, that the principal force of the Fenians was collecting at Malone, New York, and at St. Albans, Vermont. There were already several thousand at those places, constantly receiving accessions, regularly organized and under command of general officers of the so-called "Army of Ireland." To elude observation and avoid being arrested on their way, they had proceeded to those points in squads of a hundred at a time, without arms or ammunition, which were to be forwarded to them afterwards. The general, learning that these arms were on their way and had reached Watertown, New York, and other places, gave orders and despatched emissaries to have them seized, and several car-loads were in this way secured. At the same time the prominent Fenian officers were arrested, and under the authority of the President's proclamation, the railroad companies were forbidden to transport any more men, arms, or ammunition.

Thus deprived of leaders and arms, the remainder of the invaders became helpless and were soon ready to submit. General Meade thereupon had several interviews with the leaders and represented to them the utter folly of their attempting to carry out plans opposed by the power of the United States. He counselled them to return quietly to their homes and induce those under them to do the same. At length, after much trouble and vexatious delay, partially caused by the introduction of a resolution in Congress for the repeal of the neutrality laws, the Fenians agreed to disperse.

The difficulty now arose as to how they were to get away; the majority of them were entirely without means and had for some time been living on the people of the surrounding country. The general suggested to the War Department, as the speediest method of getting them away, that it furnish them transportation to their homes. This expedient being adopted, he issued a proclamation calling on them to disperse, and offering to send them home. The official returns show that over seven thousand men were then sent away, and by June 15 the general reported to the department that the Fenians had dispersed, and that the thousand miles of frontier under his command was perfectly quiet.

This affair had been admirably conducted. Its entire management had been left in the hands of General Meade, and his action had in every instance been approved by the government, which was well satisfied to be rid of what promised at one time to be a serious complication between the United States and Great Britain, and likely, without adroit management, to be politically injurious to those who

might appear prominently as instrumental in effecting a peaceable solution of the difficulty. In one of his despatches from Washington, the secretary of war, Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, thus wrote to General Meade: "Your calm, patient and firm method of dealing with this matter, so as to avoid any possible collision or bloodshed, renders it needless to make any suggestions on the subject beyond approval of your actions." The British authorities, although unable to make any formal recognition of its obligation to General Meade's wise course, nevertheless caused to be unofficially communicated to him an expression of its appreciation of his trying position and difficult task, in which his action, at the same time conciliatory and determined, had averted the possibility of war between the two countries.

On the fourth of July, 1866, on the occasion of the reception in Philadelphia of the State flags belonging to Pennsylvania regiments, General Meade, by request, made in Independence Hall the presentation address when these battle-worn colors were returned to the hands of Governor Curtin. Major-General Hancock was commanding officer of the day, and in the procession, commanding divisions, were many distinguished Pennsylvania generals of volunteers, General Robert Patterson, D. McM. Gregg, J. R. Brooke, S. W. Crawford, and others.

During the — Congress the reconstruction acts for the government of the Southern States were passed and those States divided into military districts. In this way Virginia and North and South Carolina were, in August, 1866, taken from the Military Division of the Atlantic, and that division discontinued. General Meade was then assigned to the Department of the East, his head-quarters remaining in Philadelphia. During the same session of Congress the rank of general was created, and Lieutenant-General Grant promoted to fill the position, and Major-General Sherman to fill that of lieutenant-general; these promotions leaving General Meade the second major-general in seniority in the army, General Halleck being the only major-general who ranked him.

In August, 1866, under special orders from Mr. Stanton, secretary of war, General Meade received President Johnson in Philadelphia with military honors, and escorted him in his passage through the city on his way to Chicago to lay the corner-stone of the Douglas monument. At the special request of President Johnson he joined the party, which, however, on account of the pressure of public duties in Philadelphia, he was able to accompany only as far as West Point,

rejoining it later at Chicago, and assisting at the ceremonies in that city.

The general returned to Philadelphia by way of Canada, stopping at one or two points, where he was received with the greatest distinction by the military authorities. After being handsomely entertained by the garrison at Kingston, one of Her British Majesty's gun-boats was placed at his disposal, and, accompanied by a number of the officers stationed at that place, he was escorted down the St. Lawrence River to the head of the rapids. On his arrival in Montreal he was waited upon by the commander-in-chief of the British forces, every attention was shown him, the various regiments stationed there giving entertainments and a review of the regular troops being held in his honor. The authorities, both civil and military, and the citizens generally, took every opportunity to show their appreciation of his services in the recent Fenian raids, and their recognition of his rank and record in his own army.

In June, 1867, General Meade was appointed by the Court of Common Pleas for the City and District of Philadelphia one of the commissioners of Fairmount Park, and was elected by that body to fill the position of vice-president of the Commission. He early took the deepest interest in the embellishment of the park, bringing to bear upon this object all his energy and well-known engineering skill, so that much of its excellent plan and present beauty are owing to his individual efforts.

While inspecting the forts within his command, along the northern frontier, in the autumn of this year (1867), General Meade was induced again to visit Canada. Going to Montreal and Quebec, he was received with the same hospitality that had attended his former visit. At Quebec he was the guest at a state dinner of the governor-general, Lord Monk, and was otherwise handsomely entertained by the officers of the army in garrison there. Both on this visit and the preceding one he carefully examined into the system of military prisons as established by the British Government, in which our own government was at that time entirely deficient. His observations and suggestions on this subject were embodied in several communications to the War Department, and attention was repeatedly called in his annual reports to the importance of some such system as the British being adopted for the army of the United States.

Among the many rumors during the autumn of 1867 as to changes contemplated by President Andrew Johnson in the commanders of

certain of the military districts into which the Southern States had been divided by the reconstruction acts of Congress, was one that General Meade had been favorably mentioned by him for one of the commands. This was a sphere of action to which, in the existing condition of political affairs, the general was peculiarly averse, and which nothing but the highest sense of duty, in obedience to orders, could have induced him to occupy. His views and feelings in regard to the matter are so fully set forth in the answer which he made to a letter from a Southern friend, which, after referring complimentarily to his past services, expressed the hope that he would be selected for one of the commands, that they will be most fitly conveyed in the words of his own in reply. He wrote: "I thank you most sincerely for the kind and complimentary terms in which you speak of my services. My conscience tells me that, whilst I never swerved from what I considered my duty, during the trying times of the war, I never felt called on in the discharge of my duty to entertain or exhibit feelings of hatred against those who, whilst I knew they were acting wrongly, and were without justification, yet I acknowledged were acting upon what they considered their rights. And I am very sorry to see, now that the conflict of arms is over, that *political passion* is again assuming the ascendancy, and that, blinded by this malign influence, both sides are plunging into the same evil courses which originated the war, and which I had hoped the expenditure of blood and treasure which the war cost would have taught both sides to avoid. However, these are things that neither you nor I can control, however much we may deplore. Whilst it would be a gratification to me to aid in any way to restore the wounds of my bleeding country, the problem is one surrounded by so many difficulties, and blended so intimately with the questions, not only of *politics*, but of *party*, that I have esteemed myself very fortunate in being hitherto permitted to remain where I am. Besides, considerations of a domestic character render my present command much more desirable than any other.

"I sincerely trust the future will be more bright than present appearances would indicate. We have a magnificent country, more blessed by Providence than any other on the face of the earth, and if we are not the happiest of people it is our own fault."

The general's preference for remaining where he was stationed, in Philadelphia, was known in Washington, but it was understood that his assignment, which was made by General Orders of the 28th of December, 1867, to the command of the Third Military District, was

brought about through the President's personal selection of him for this frontier. It was a wise selection, but not, in all probability, for the reasons which had induced the President to make it.

On the 2d of January the general left Philadelphia to assume command of the Third Military District, composed of the States of Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, head-quarters at Atlanta, Georgia; and staying on his way only a few hours in Washington, solely for the purpose of seeing General Grant, he arrived in Atlanta on the 5th of January.

Under the general's predecessor in command of the Third Military District, Brevet Major-General John Pope, the reconstruction laws had been in force for nearly a year, and great dissatisfaction existed on the part of those opposed to their proper construction. The substitution of General Meade for him was looked upon with evident satisfaction by this class of the community, which had been led to believe that he was in sympathy with the peculiar views of President Johnson. In this they were doomed to disappointment. The province of a general in command of the district did not embrace the question of the right or wrong, the constitutionality or unconstitutionality, of the reconstruction acts of Congress. His duty was simply to execute those laws with even-handed justice. General Meade at once addressed himself to the task before him, and succeeded in it, as the result of his administration will bear testimony. The limitations of this work do not admit of a detailed account of his services during his command in the South. It is only necessary to make, in this connection, the following brief reference to the work accomplished, as gathered from his annual report for 1868, which cannot fail to be interesting to those desirous of knowing his connection with the historical events of the period.

On the general assuming command of the district, the political situation then existing was, that in Georgia a convention, elected under the reconstruction acts of Congress, was in session, but embarrassed for want of funds; that in Alabama a convention had met, founded a constitution, nominated State officers, and adjourned; that in Florida an election had been held for members of a convention which was to meet on the 20th of January.

In order to relieve the Georgia convention from its financial embarrassment the general felt constrained to depose the provisional governor of the State, who held the reconstruction acts to be unconstitutional, and had refused to acknowledge the authority of the

district commander; and subsequently, for the same reasons, to depose the State treasurer and the comptroller. He assigned to these positions officers of the army, his reasons for this course being, as thus expressed in his report: "I consider it judicious policy to avail myself of the authority granted in the reconstruction laws, to detail officers of the army to perform these duties, as in this way I gave evidence to the people of the State and of the country that my only object in making the removals was the execution of the law, and that the same was free from any personal or political bias."

When the officers appointed entered upon their duties they found that all the important books and the records with the State seal had been removed, and that the treasury was without funds. In this condition of affairs they went to work, and with the moneys derived from the net income of the Western and Atlantic Railroad, belonging to the State, and from taxes due and uncollected for 1867 met all demands for the charitable institutions, the civil-list appropriations, and the constitutional convention; and in the meantime the interest on the State debt was met by payment from funds in New York belonging to the State of Georgia. When relieved from their duties, which naturally terminated by the appointment of officers elected under the new constitution of the State, they had the gratification of turning over a handsome balance remaining in the treasury, thus ending an administration of affairs which had proved not only creditable to themselves, but most satisfactory to the people of all parties of the State.

The convention, after being in session for several months, adopted a new constitution, which, with nominations for State officers, was submitted to the people in April, and was ratified by a large majority of the registered voters, all parties attending the polls. This constitution was, with some modifications, accepted by Congress, and the State formally admitted to representation in July, 1868.

In Alabama a constitution had been framed before the arrival of General Meade, and the vote as to its ratification or rejection and the election for officers of the State took place after his arrival, in February. This constitution was fairly rejected by the people, chiefly on account of the fact that, as framed, it was not agreeable to a large number of the friends of reconstruction, but partly on account of the circumstance that the constitutional convention had made to all State offices nominations which were not acceptable to them. General Meade had advised against holding the election for State

officers at the same time that the new constitution was being voted upon. After the rejection of the new constitution, he was in favor, and so reported, of the reassembling of the convention to revise the constitution. As events turned out, however, Congress accepted the new constitution as framed and admitted the State to the Union.

In Florida the election of members for the constitutional convention had taken place while General Meade's predecessor was in command of the district, and under advice given by him at that time; the convention met in January.

After the arrival of General Meade, at the beginning of January, and prior to the assembling of the convention, communications from the provisional governor and many other prominent citizens of the State were forwarded to him by the President, making the gravest charges against the managers of the election for delegates to the convention, even that of fraudulent execution of districting and registration, and urging him to postpone the assembling of the convention and examine into these charges. But General Meade, having carefully examined into the law, found no remedy short of congressional action, even if the charges should be proved, and he decided not to interfere with the meeting of the convention. He, however, ordered a board of officers to investigate the charges, and notified the memorialists of his action; and he pledged himself to place before Congress all the testimony they might produce before the board. This board, after remaining in session for some weeks, and calling without avail on the memorialists for their evidence, closed its session without having any charge proved of all those made.

Scarcely had the convention met when endless dissensions and bickerings ensued, terminating in a split, each side claiming to be the legitimate convention. At this point of time General Meade saw his way clear to interfering, with propriety, by proposing certain compromise measures, which being accepted, the two sides coalesced and reorganized the convention, the constitution framed by it being ratified by the people and the State admitted by Congress.

Thus the three States composing the Third Military District having been admitted to representation in Congress, General Meade at once issued orders declaring the cessation of all intervention in civil affairs by the military power. "The inauguration of civil government," he remarks in his report, "was to me, personally, a source of great relief, charged as I had been with almost unlimited powers."

This duty of the civil rehabilitation of States through military

agency, which, however necessary, was naturally repugnant to General Meade, yet found in him one admirably fitted in mind and character for the duties which devolved upon him. Upon the numerous intricate and delicate questions that came before him he brought to bear a quick perception and clear insight which enabled him in a wonderfully short space of time to reach conclusions that would bear the test of the soundest legal judgment. Added to this qualification was his unflagging energy and almost unlimited capacity for work, emanating from and exemplifying only a small portion of which are his orders, reports, and communications, all models of clearness and all breathing the most impartial and liberal spirit.

The power of disapproving the acts of the district commanders had by the reconstruction laws been vested in the general-in-chief, to whom General Meade submitted his views and proposed course of action before carrying it into effect in any important case, and the instances are rare where his judgment was overruled.

In August the Second and Third Military Districts were abolished and consolidated into the Department of the South, to the command of which General Meade was assigned. This added the States of North and South Carolina to his command and greatly increased his duties.

Soon after taking command of this department, he was constantly urged by the governors of the various States to use troops to sustain the civil governments. But he invariably refused compliance with these solicitations, holding that the State governors must endeavor to stand by themselves, and that it was his duty not to interfere until after it had become evident that the State had exhausted all its efforts to preserve the peace between rival factions, or in its own protection, and only then when it had called on him in the manner prescribed by law.

His report, after expressing thanks for the prompt and efficient co-operations always received from the various subordinate district commanders, the staff, and the officers and men of the several commands, concludes as follows: "No army in previous history was ever called on to discharge such delicate and responsible duties, involving powers that, if abused, might have led to the most serious consequences; and yet the transition from military to civil power was so imperceptible as to have passed unnoticed but for the special means, by way of proclamations, orders, etc., to make it public. I do not mean to deny but that there were individual exceptions, and that in some cases bad judgment, political bias, or personal feelings, may have

influenced the course of some individual officer or soldier—this is no more than is to be expected from our nature—but I do maintain that, taking the large force, extending over such an extent of territory and vested with supreme power, that instead of the few instances where, perhaps, criticism might be appropriate, the wonder was—and it is to be said to the credit of the army—that so little abuse was made of a power by those who might very readily be supposed difficult to restrain and control.”

General Meade, being obliged in the performance of his duties to make extended journeys to different parts of his command, incidentally endeavored through personal intercourse to cultivate friendly relations with the people. At his headquarters at Atlanta he entertained as far as his means would allow, seeking to promote pleasant social relations with the citizens. Becoming greatly interested in the Protestant Episcopal Church in that city, which he regularly attended, and finding it a small frame building, very much out of repair, and not by any means furnished as was desirable, the poverty caused by the war having rendered it impossible for the congregation to repair or furnish it properly, he, through his own personal solicitation and the active interest of his wife among their friends at the North, raised a sum of money sufficient not only to defray the expense of the desired repairs, but to purchase a new organ for the church. By those benefited this act was held in grateful recognition, and to him it was a source of the deepest satisfaction, when he came to leave those parts, to see the church established on a prosperous footing.

During the general's residence in Atlanta, he made many warm friends. That he did not make more was owing on his part not to any unfriendly feelings or to remitting any proper efforts, but to the unhappy condition of the country. His course from first to last of his civil administration, although marked by the absence of all avoidable interference, met with the most violent abuse, his motives were impugned and his character bitterly assailed. His was necessarily the fate of all who hold in troublous times the scales with even-handed justice. Sharing the animosities of neither side they must necessarily offend both. From the first he consistently ignored all partisan considerations and faithfully executed the law, without regard to personal or political preferences. As the inevitable consequence he encountered the enmity of both sides without receiving any sympathy from either. Placed in position by a President who probably thought that in him he had found a representative of his own policy toward

the South, backed by a Congress whose policy leaned to the other extreme, he found his duty performed simply in the execution of the law, and in the display of temperate and conciliatory conduct to both sides and to all shades of party alike. Time will bring to all fair-minded citizens of those States included in his command some appreciation of the immense difficulties that surrounded him, and the embarrassing positions in which he was often placed. They will come perhaps to recognize the purity of motives that had never before been impugned, the soundness of judgment, the liberal and friendly policy, and the conscientious discharge of duty, displayed by the general in his administration of both district and department.

During General Meade's service in the Southern States, General Grant had been nominated by the Republican party for the office of President of the United States, and in November, 1868, he was elected.

General Grant's occupation of the presidential chair, which was regarded as a foregone conclusion, would necessarily vacate his position as general of the army, thus causing vacancies in the higher grades. The approaching change, therefore, naturally excited much speculation in and out of the army, as to who would be promoted to fill the positions. It seemed to be well understood that General Grant would not resign his position in the army, but that it would lapse when he assumed the duties of chief magistrate of the nation, and thus also the opportunity and power to make these promotions would be in his hands. It was on all sides conceded that Lieutenant-General Sherman, the next in rank to General Grant, had indisputable right as well as likelihood of succeeding to the generalcy. The position of lieutenant-general then becoming vacant, it was believed by General Meade and his friends that, providing General Halleck, the senior major-general, should not be selected, General Meade, the next in rank, was in justice entitled to the commission.

As, however, the time of General Grant's inauguration as President approached, it was rumored that he intended to disregard the claims of General Meade to the position and to promote one more congenial to him personally. This was intimated to General Meade, and he was advised to take action in the premises. But he was now, as he had been on the occasion of a former promotion, without politically influential friends, and he was also loath to credit that the services, hitherto acknowledged by General Grant, would now be ignored by him. He had served his country faithfully as an officer of the

army for more than twenty-seven years; had by his talents and energy steadily risen from the lowest commissioned grade to within two of the highest; and had gained his various promotions as a general officer, both in the volunteer and regular army, by his universally acknowledged skill and indomitable bravery on the field of battle. He had, at the most critical period of the war, while commanding the largest independent army in the service of the government, wrested its greatest victory from the ablest commander of the South. He had afterward commanded that same army under the very eye of General Grant, when, as the latter had said, "confronting the strongest and best appointed army of the South," led by the same renowned commander, who for the first time had been by him defeated.

No one, apparently, up to a certain point of time, had appreciated these facts more strongly than had General Grant, certainly no one could have recognized them in stronger language than he had used. In recommending General Meade for promotion while the war was still in progress, he had described him as one "who had more than met his most sanguine expectations"; whom he considered "one of the fittest officers for a large command he had come in contact with," and regarding whom he "defied any man to name a commander who would do more than he had done, with the same chances." And these were General Grant's pronounced opinions, to continue in his own words, "after a campaign the most protracted and covering more severely contested battles than any of which we have any account in history."

In the brief campaign which took place immediately after these expressions of opinion by General Grant, which campaign ended with the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, there had been no opportunity for any other general to show greater ability than General Meade had displayed, even assuming that another who possessed it had been present with the army; but whatever did occur in that campaign had only served to add increased lustre to the reputation of General Meade. Then, as if it had been ordained that this patriotic soldier should successfully fill every allotted sphere of duty, General Meade had just completed a trying and disagreeable tour of service in the civil administration and reconstruction of the South, which, for its firm, temperate, and wise course, will bear favorable comparison with any similar service, and which received the full approval of General Grant.

It is hard to conceive, therefore, in view of General Grant's rec-

ognition of General Meade's brilliant services, that he could have meditated wrong against him, when gratitude, it should seem, would have prompted the deepest consideration of one who by conscientious and earnest discharge of duty in carrying out his plans had, more than any one else, conduced to their success and enabled him to gain the highest honors in the gift of the nation.

It so happened that a short time before the inauguration of General Grant, General Meade was paying a flying visit to his family in Philadelphia. The rumors as to General Grant's contemplated action had by this time become so prevalent and so positive in their character that, despite the assertion of some of General Grant's friends that he would never dream of committing such a gross act of injustice as overlooking General Meade, the latter felt it to be due to himself, in order to forestall any possible pretence of misunderstanding as to his claims, to express his views clearly to General Grant. He, therefore, on his return to his post in the South, stopped in Washington, and in an interview with General Grant referred to the various rumors which were rife, and stated explicitly what he regarded as his due, and the grounds upon which he founded his claim. General Grant listened to what was said, but made no direct reply, intimating neither by word nor act what his intentions were.

But this imperturbable silence was in itself a full reply, and General Meade for the first time knew that his expectations were not to be realized. Although he had been repeatedly warned by his friends that this was to be the end, he, with a firm faith that justice would at last be done, for justice' sake, had not faltered in his belief. But, although still clinging to the hope that lingers, despite a man's conviction, he was now prepared for the worst. He returned to his post and there quietly awaited the course of events.

If he could not then divest himself of all hope that mature reflection would bring justice in its train, Grant's later course of action, far wider-reaching than that which merely affected Meade personally, must have disabused his mind of the idea that there had ever been the least warrant for the hope. Times had greatly changed from those when he was living the life of camps, in front of the capital in constant jeopardy. His chief, once installed in the presidential office, might well forget the man who, equally strong in council and in action, was in the field, but not now indispensable. The military intimacy that had subsisted between them had ceased with the war. Their training, habits, tastes, all pointed to different paths, far asunder.

There were no more armies to be extricated from difficult positions, no more battles to be fought. General Grant may have felt then, what he had said a few months before to General Meade, that "he had been pained at the persistently unfair and bitter attacks on him [Meade] by a portion of the press of the country." He might have acknowledged, as he did personally to General Meade, his regret at the unjust treatment he [Meade] had received at the hands of the committee on the conduct of the war. He might have deplored, as he did, that his own presence as general-in-chief within the same theatre of military operations should have had the unavoidable effect of overshadowing the general commanding the army. But when the time came to rectify all these slights of fortune, to rebuke injustice, to stamp with approval service which a republic, of all governments, is presumed to recognize—that of the most deserving—he was not equal to the deed.

On the 4th of March, 1869, General Grant was inaugurated President of the United States, and almost his first act was the appointment of Major-General Sheridan, General Meade's junior in rank and years, to the position of lieutenant-general of the army. Promotion is a soldier's highest ambition, and General Meade had every right to expect it, but he who knew justice required it and in whose power it lay did not see fit to give it to him.

General Meade's opinion of this action is tersely expressed in the following letter written to Mrs. Meade immediately after his learning of his having been passed over in the promotion:

To Mrs. George G. Meade:

ATLANTA, March 6, 1869.

DEAR MARGARET:

The blow has been struck and our worst fears realized. Yesterday I received late in the afternoon a telegram directing me to turn over the command of this department to the next in rank, and proceed to Philadelphia to take command of the Military Division of the Atlantic. This despatch was from the Adjutant General, but signed by order of the *General* commanding the army. I at once saw that Sherman had been made General, and inferred Sheridan was Lieutenant General, and that Sherman, in the goodness of his heart, sympathizing with me in my affliction, had sent me at the earliest moment to Philadelphia. About nine o'clock came the despatch that Sheridan's name had gone in and been confirmed.

My own sweet love, you can imagine the force of this blow, but it is useless to repine over what cannot be remedied, and we must find consolation in the consciousness we have that it is the cruelest and meanest act of injustice, and the hope, if there is any sense of wrong or justice in the country, that the man who perpetrated it will some day be made to feel so. Dearest, I hope you will take this blow with resignation, and be satisfied that I am coming to you, and in each other's society try to find that calm, dignified, protest which such low conduct alone merits.

I shall be detained here about a week, but will leave no time in getting home. I cannot write all I feel; indeed it is as well I should not. God has thought proper to give us a grievous burden to bear, and it is our part to endeavor to be submissive. Love to all; I shall soon see you.

Ever yours,

GEORGE G. MEADE.

Conscious of right and of his deserts, General Meade bore the stroke unflinchingly in the bosom of his family with Christian fortitude and resignation, and abroad with the calmness of a gentleman. He had, in the fulness of his powers, spent his best thought and energy and blood for a cause which, successfully upheld, had failed to bring in its train for him the only just recognition. He, however, believed the day would come when men in their hearts would do him justice, a justice of which he was defrauded and of which the rank denied him was but the outward symbol. The degree to which he felt the injustice that had been done him few even of his intimates ever suspected, so jealously did he guard the secret of his heart. Cast in a fine mould, he did not wear his heart upon his sleeve for daws to peck at, but buried his grief deep in his own bosom, satisfied that when petty, jarring interests had had their little day history would do him justice, and from a pinnacle on which he defied the assaults of evil fortune he looked down on the meaner men below.

On the 12th of March, 1869, General Meade turned over the command of the Department of the South to the next officer in rank, Brevet Major-General Ruger, and, proceeding direct to the North, assumed command of the Military Division of the Atlantic, headquarters in Philadelphia.

In April he was seized with an acute attack of pneumonia, and for many days his life was despaired of. The disease, however, finally

yielding to medical skill and careful nursing, the summer found him, although recovering slowly, almost restored to his usual health.

From this time forward his life, so far as concerned his military career, was uneventful. Nothing occurred to disturb the routine of office duty except an occasional inspection of his command. His active interest continued in all matters connected with the city not conflicting with his military duties. His position as vice-president of the Fairmount Park Commission had been kept vacant for him during his absence in the South, and it was in acting in this capacity that he found his chief occupation and pleasure, rarely a day passing that did not find him either riding or driving through the vast extent of the park, with every nook of which he was familiar. His presence there never ceased to excite pleasurable emotion in those who chanced to catch a glimpse of him who, as soldier, had spent so many weary years amid the din of battle and the turmoil of civil affairs. Now on horseback, often accompanied by one of his daughters, occupied with inspecting improvements, with planning bridle-paths, and otherwise contributing to the beauties of the grounds, he was to be seen almost daily, like any private citizen, enjoying these quiet scenes.

Naturally, the prominence which he had achieved could not fail to be evidenced on all public occasions. But not only in these, but in many others, such as where difficult questions arose in the affairs of the city, his advice was much sought. Never overburdened with worldly goods, he yet gave freely to all charitable works. He was identified with many institutions for relief, notably with the Lincoln Institution, for the care and education of soldiers' orphans, a work in which he was deeply interested. This institution he had been chiefly influential in founding and organizing in 1865, and was continuously the president of it from that time until his death. The general's military duties were now of such a nature that he was rarely called from home. He, however, made a point of attending the various soldiers' reunions whenever it was possible, for his heart always warmed toward and he had always a kind word for a good soldier. He regarded it as the duty of those who had acquired rank and distinction in the war to prove by their presence and encouragement to those who had served under them, now that their services were no longer needed, that they were still thought of and held in respect by their former commanders and a grateful country. He was a regular attendant at the annual meetings of the Society of the Army of the Potomac. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than

to meet his old comrades of the army and to talk over with them their campaigns together.

He occupied a prominent place in all social gatherings in Philadelphia. His genial manners, conversational powers, consummate tact, and wide experience as a man of the world commanded the respect and admiration of all whom he met, and few entertainments were considered complete without his presence as an honored guest.

He continued in the enjoyment of this tranquil existence during the next three short years that were to close his well-rounded life. The winters were spent in Philadelphia, occupying the house presented to his wife during the war by his personal friends, and the summers at a country residence about ten miles from the city. It was here that he was living in the summer of 1872, which had been to him a period of the most thorough enjoyment. With all his family gathered around him, the centre of a refined and cultivated circle sojourning in the midst of a beautiful country, with nothing to disturb his well-earned ease, he had passed the entire summer at Meadow Bank, in the calm enjoyment of a serene existence. The great contentment with which his heart had been filled found expression as the time approached for his return to the city, when he often regretfully spoke of the summer being over and of its having comprised the happiest days he had passed for many a long year.

In October he was again at his home in the city preparing for the winter season, everything around him still bright and prosperous, himself in the enjoyment of perfect health, and his children advancing and settling comfortably in life, his friendly relations with the general-in-chief of the army, General Sherman, rendering highly probable his security in his present command, which, representing to him his home, was naturally the command he desired. As a quiet spectator he maintained his wonted interest in public affairs, although latterly somewhat withdrawn from active connection with those in power at the seat of government. And thus, from every point of view, a long, unclouded future seemed assured. His last official letter notified the department of the death of Colonel Hartman Bache, of the engineers, one of his earliest commanding officers, and no one who saw him at the funeral of that officer dreamed that within a month they would be called upon to perform the same sad rites for him.

He was, as usual, in his office on October 31, attending to his duties and seemingly in excellent health. About noon Mrs. Meade

called for him, and they left the office together for their daily walk. They had gone but a short distance when the general complained of severe pains in his side, which increasing in violence, he went directly home. By the time he had reached home his suffering had become so intense that the family physician, Doctor John Neill, was summoned, and pronounced the attack a severe case of pneumonia.

Whilst those around him fondly hoped that medical skill and a constitution fortified by temperate living would suffice to carry him safely through the danger, he himself from the first had a premonition that he would not recover, and therefore, whilst never becoming depressed, but resolutely following out all the directions of his physicians, he yet made every preparation and took every precaution looking toward a fatal end. His instructions and wishes were conveyed to his family calmly, as from one who would not unduly alarm and, on the other hand, one who would not permit a sentiment to stand in the way of a duty, not only to prepare the minds of those whom he loved for the worst, but to give them the benefit of his advice for a possible future when his voice should have become silent forever. This done, the day before his death he requested to see the Reverend Doctor Hoffman, from whose hands he received the holy communion. "His heart," as Bishop Whipple said later, in his beautiful address, "was in the country whither he was going. He looked to the Saviour, who was the only one in heaven or earth who could help him. He asked for the holy communion, and by the Lord's table gathered manna for the last journey; the words of penitence and the look of faith were blended with his dying prayers, and he fell asleep."

On the 6th of November, six days from the time when he had been stricken, he passed away. To those about him to whom he was so dear, whose support and guide he had been through life, his calm and resigned departure was a close in keeping with his well-spent life. His last thoughts and words were for those whom he had cherished throughout life. With a loving look of recognition toward each member of his sorrowing family, and gently murmuring, "I am about crossing a beautiful wide river, and the opposite shore is coming nearer and nearer," he died.

The funeral services, conducted by the Right Reverend Bishop Odenheimer, assisted by the Reverend Doctor Hoffman, were held on November 11, in Saint Mark's Church. Thirty-two years before, in

the same city, the bishop had joined him in wedlock to her who was now left to mourn his loss. The Right Reverend Bishop Whipple, of Minnesota, whose visits to him when in camp had been so full of solace, made a touching address to the crowded congregation. He said: "I do not come to-day to lay a tribute of affection on a great soldier's grave; the city, the State and the nation have done this. So long as our country lives, these names which are inwrought in her history will be household words. I stand by the grave of one I loved. My thoughts can only be of the One on whom he leaned as he went down into the dark valley, and of the land of beauty which is afar off. How poor are words of praise! How empty are the honors of the world beside the grave! Far sweeter to the ear are the words from heaven, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.'

"If I asked any of you to describe our brother's character, you would tell me he had a woman's gentleness with the strength of a great-hearted man. I believe it was the lessons of faith, inwrought into a soldier's life, which made him know no guide but duty, which made him so kind to the helpless, which placed him foremost in all public works, and made his name a household word in all your homes. During the dark days of our Civil War I happened to be in Washington. He telegraphed me to come and celebrate Easter in his camp with the holy communion. It was a strange place for Easter flowers and Easter songs, and the story of the Resurrection, but I do not recall a sweeter service or one more redolent of the peace of heaven. Of the bronzed veterans who knelt beside the Lord's table, some, like Williams and Meade, are sleeping with the dead, others are scattered far and busy in life's work.

"That day I knew that we had in our camps centurions who feared God and prayed always."

The solemn service ended, the congregation rose, while the coffin was borne from the church, followed by the male relations of the general, his intimate personal friends, the President of the United States, the general of the army, and many other distinguished officers both of the army and navy. It was placed, covered with the national flag, upon the caisson upon which it was to be transported. The funeral escort, consisting of regular troops and the national guard of Pennsylvania, commanded by Major-General McDowell, closed around the caisson, which was followed by General Meade's faithful old horse, Baldy, who had carried him through many a hard-fought field, and by a long line of carriages containing his male relations, per-

sonal friends, officers of the general, State and city governments, and took up the line of march for Laurel Hill, through a city in which business was suspended, the public offices closed, and many private residences draped in mourning.

Impressive as the services in Saint Mark's had been, rapt the attention and evident the grief of those who had formed that congregation, they paled before the significance of the silence of the vast multitude through which the procession took its way towards East Fairmount Park. It seemed as though it were marching through the city, not of one, but of many dead, so silent were the masses of people through whom it passed. Not an unseemly sight or sound occurred to mar the solemnity of the occasion. The respectful attitude, the uncovered heads, the perfect silence of the crowds, bore testimony far beyond even the powerful words which but a few minutes before had been uttered at the church. Arrived within the inclosure of East Fairmount Park, the effect was intensified. It was an autumn day, cloudy, calm, the foliage changed to sombre hues, the whole landscape breathing of sadness and peace, but more than all, upon it seemed to have descended, as if from heaven, a solemn stillness among the masses of people who filled and crowded the hill-sides.

A brief halt ensued, until regiments, drawn up in line on the broad level expanse between the hills, for the first time broke the silence by volleys of musketry, when the remains were borne to the steam-boat, followed by the small party and the guard of honor who were to accompany them to the grave, and who having embarked, the boat pushed out into the stream amid a final volley of musketry from the regiments on shore.

Draped in a deep pall of black, noiseless and without jar, she passed up the river, opening to view its beautiful banks, clothed in autumnal foliage, and the stillness, gone for a moment in the crash of musketry, came back and continued to accompany the dead soldier, as he was borne to his last resting-place past banks on which, drawn up at intervals in line, stood regiment after regiment, with its band playing a dirge as his requiem, the notes of one becoming fainter and fainter as those of the next were wafted down the stream. And so, to the landing at Laurel Hill, the strange stillness, broken only by the sad music, followed the dead as his mortal remains were borne near to their resting-place through the scenes which he had loved so well.

They laid to rest with the last sad rites, beside his eldest boy,

called away in the dark hours of the war, the hero of Gettysburg, the record of whose simple tombstone reads:

GEORGE GORDON MEADE,

Major-General U. S. Army.

Born in Cadiz, Spain, Dec. 31st, 1815.

Died in Phila., Pa., Nov. 6th, 1872.

“He did his work bravely and is at rest.”

So lived and died one who, according to those who knew him best, whether parent, brother, sister, wife, child, friend, or fellow-soldier, bore himself nobly.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DOCUMENT, HALLECK TO MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF JULY 8, 1863. SEE PAGE 132, VOL. II

Halleck to Meade :

WASHINGTON, *July 7, 1863, 2.55 P. M.*

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that you have been appointed a Brig. Gen. in the Regular Army to rank from July 3rd, the date of your brilliant victory at Gettysburg.

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GENERAL HALLECK AND GENERAL MEADE, AFTER THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG, JULY 7-10, 1863, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF JULY 10, 1863. SEE PAGE 133, VOL. II

Halleck to Meade :

July 7.

I have received from the President the following note, which I respectfully communicate.

MAJ. GEN. HALLECK

We have certain information that Vicksburg surrendered to Genl. Grant on the 4th of July. Now, if Gen. Meade can complete this work, so gloriously prosecuted thus far, by the literal or substantial destruction of Lee's Army the rebellion will be over.

Yours truly

A. LINCOLN.

Halleck to Meade :

July 7, 8.45 P. M.

You have given the enemy a stunning blow at Gettysburg, follow it up and give him another before he can cross the Potomac. When he crosses circumstances will determine whether it will be best to pursue him by the Shenandoah Valley or this side of Blue Ridge. There is strong evidence that he is short of Artillery ammunition and if vigorously pressed he must suffer.

Halleck to Meade :

July 7, 9 P. M.

I have seen your despatches to Gen. Couch of 4.30 P. M. You are perfectly right. Push forward and fight Lee before he can cross the Potomac.

Halleck to Meade :

July 8, 12.30 P. M.

There is reliable information that the enemy is crossing at Williamsport. The opportunity to attack his divided forces should not be lost. The President is urgent and anxious that your Army should move against him by forced marches.

Meade to Halleck :

July 8, 1863, 2 P. M.

Gen'l Couch learns from scouts that the train is crossing at Williamsport very slowly. So long as the river is unfordable the enemy cannot cross. My cavalry report that they had a fight near Funkstown, through which they drove the enemy to Hagerstown, where a large infantry force was seen. From all I can gather the enemy extends from Hagerstown to Williamsport covering the march of their trains. Their cavalry and infantry pickets are advanced to the Hagerstown and Sharpsburg pike, on the general line of the Antietam. We hold Boonsboro, and our pickets, four miles in front, toward Hagerstown, are in contact with the enemy's pickets. My Army is assembling slowly; the rains of yesterday and last night have made all roads but pikes almost impassable. Artillery and wagons are stalled; it will take time to collect them together. A large portion of the men are barefooted. Shoes will arrive at Frederick today and will be issued as soon as possible. The spirit of the Army is high; the men are ready and willing to make any exertion to push forward. The very first moment I can get the different commands, the artillery and cavalry, properly supplied and in hand, I will move forward. Be assured I most earnestly desire to try the fortunes of war with the enemy on this side of the river, hoping, through Providence and the bravery of my men to settle the question, but I should be wrong not to frankly tell you of the difficulties encountered. I expect to find the enemy in a strong position, well covered with artillery, and I do not desire to imitate his example at Gettysburg and assault a position when the chances are so greatly against success. I wish in advance to moderate the expectation of those who, in ignorance of the difficulties to be encountered, may expect too much. All that I can do under the circumstances, I pledge this Army to do.

Meade to Halleck :

July 8, 1863, 3 P. M.

My information as to the crossing of the enemy does not agree with that just received in your dispatch. His whole force is in position between Funkstown and Williamsport. I have just received information

that he has driven in my cavalry force in front of Boonsboro. My Army is and has been making forced marches, short of rations and barefooted. Our Corps marched yesterday and last night over 30 miles. I take occasion to repeat that I will use my utmost efforts to push forward this Army.

Halleck to Meade :

July 8, 5 P. M.

Do not understand me as expressing any dissatisfaction. On the contrary your Army has done most nobly. I only wish to give you opinions formed from information received here. It is telegraphed from near Harpers Ferry that the enemy have been crossing for the last two days. It is also reported that they have a bridge across. If Lee's Army is divided by the river the importance of attacking the part on this side is incalculable—such an opportunity may never occur again. If on the contrary he has massed his whole force on the Antietam time must be taken to also concentrate your forces—Your opportunities for information are better than mine. Brig. Gen. Kelly was ordered some days ago to concentrate at Hancock and attack the enemy's right. Maj. Gen. Brooks is also moving from Pittsburgh to reinforce Kelly. All troops arriving from New York and Fort Monroe are sent directly to Harpers Ferry unless you order differently. You will have forces sufficient to render your victory certain. My only fear now is that the enemy may escape by crossing the river.

Meade to Halleck :

MIDDLETOWN, July 9, 1863, 11 A. M.

The Army is moving in three columns, the right column having in it three Corps. The line occupied to-day with the advance will be on the other side of the mountains, from Boonsboro to Rohrer'sville. Two Corps will march without their artillery, the animals being completely exhausted, many falling on the road.

The enemy's infantry were driven back yesterday evening from Boonsboro, or rather they retired on being pressed, towards Hagerstown. I am still under the impression that Lee's whole force is between Hagerstown and Williamsport, with an advance at Middleburg, on the road to Greencastle, observing Couch. The state of the river and the difficulty of crossing has rendered it imperative on him, to have his army, artillery and trains, ready to receive my attack. I propose to move on a line from Boonsboro towards the centre of the line from Hagerstown to Williamsport, my left flank looking to the river, and my right towards the mountains, keeping the road to Frederick in my rear and centre. I shall try to keep as concentrated as the roads by which I can move will admit, so that should the enemy attack, I can mass to meet him, and if he assumes the defensive, I can deploy as I think proper.

I transmit a copy of dispatch sent to Gen. Smith at Waynesboro; one of like tenor was sent to Gen. Couch. The operations of both these officers should be made to conform to mine. They can readily ascertain my

progress from scouts and by the movements of the enemy; and if the forces under them are of any practical value, they could join my right flank and assist in the attack. My cavalry will be pushed to-day well to the front on the right and left, and I hope will collect information. It is with the greatest difficulty that I can obtain any reliable intelligence of the enemy. I send you a dispatch received this A. M. from Gen. Neill, in command of a brigade of infantry and one of cavalry, who followed the retreat of the enemy through Fairfield and effected a junction with Gen. Smith, at Waynesboro. A copy of my dispatch to Gen. Smith is also sent you. When I spoke of two Corps having to leave their batteries behind, I should have stated that they remained at Frederick to get new horses and shoe the others, and they will rejoin their Corps this P. M. The object of the remark was to show the delay.

I think the decisive battle of the war will be fought in a few days; in view of its momentous consequences I desire to adopt such measures as, in my judgment, will tend to ensure success, even though these may be deemed tardy.

11.30 A. M.—A deserter has just been brought within our lines, who reported the enemy's army all between Hagerstown and Williamsport; that they have brought up a bridge from Winchester, which is now thrown across at Williamsport; that they are using this bridge, not to cross their forces, but to bring over supplies; that the men are in fine spirits, and the talk among them is, they mean to try it again. This deserter says he belongs to the artillery of Stuart's command. I send the information for what it is worth.

Halleck to Meade :

July 9, 1863, 3 P. M.

The evidence that Lee's army will fight north of the Potomac seems reliable. In that case you will want all your forces in hand. Kelley is collecting at Hancock. I have directed him to push forward, so as to take part in the coming battle. Brooks' militia refused to cross the Pennsylvania line. Everything I can get here will be pushed on to Harper's Ferry, from which place you can call them in to your left. Do not be influenced by any dispatch from here against your own judgment. Regard them as suggestions only. Our information here is not always correct. Take any horses or supplies you can find in the country. They can be settled for afterward. Would it not be well to fortify the Hagerstown Gap, through the South Mountain as a part of the support?

Halleck to Meade :

July 9, 4.30 P. M.

Two full regiments and two complete batteries are ordered to leave here to night. Three Brigades are on their way and may be expected to morrow or the day after. They will be sent to Harpers Ferry unless you wish otherwise. I shall do everything in my power to reinforce you. I fully appreciate the importance of the coming battle.

Meade to Halleck :

July 10, 1863, 1 P. M.

The information received to-day indicates that the enemy occupy positions extending from the Potomac, near Falling Water, through Downsville to Funkstown and to the northeast of Hagerstown, Ewell's Corps being to the northeast of Hagerstown, Longstreet's at Funkstown and A. P. Hill's on their right. These positions they are said to be intrenching.

I am advancing on a line perpendicular to the line from Hagerstown to Williamsport, and the Army will this evening occupy a position extending from the Boonsboro and Hagerstown road, at a point one mile beyond Beaver Creek, to Bakersville, near the Potomac. Our cavalry advance this morning drove the enemy's cavalry, on the Boonsboro pike, to within a mile of Funkstown, when the enemy deployed a large force and opened a fire from heavy guns (20-pounders).

I shall advance cautiously on the same line to-morrow until I can develop more fully the enemy's position and force, upon which my future operations will depend.

General Smith is still at Waynesboro; a dispatch was received from him at that place, this morning. Instructions similar to those of yesterday were sent to him.

Halleck to Meade :

July 10, 9 P. M.

I think it will be best for you to postpone a general battle till you can concentrate all your forces and get up your reserve and reinforcements. I will push on the troops as fast as they arrive. It would be well to have staff officers at the Monocacy to direct the troops arriving where to go and see that they are properly fitted out. They should join you by forced marches. Beware of partial combats, bring up and hurl upon the enemy all your forces, good and bad.

APPENDIX C

TELEGRAMS BETWEEN HALLECK AND MEADE, MENTIONED IN
LETTER OF JULY 14, 1863. SEE PAGE 134, VOL. II

Halleck to Meade July 14 (in part):

I need hardly say to you that the escape of Lee's army without another battle has created great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President, and it will require an active and energetic pursuit on your part to remove the impression that it has not been sufficiently active heretofore.

Meade to Halleck July 14:

Having performed my duty conscientiously and to the best of my ability, the censure of the President conveyed in your dispatch of 1 P. M. this day, is, in my judgment, so undeserved that I feel compelled most respectfully to ask to be immediately relieved from the command of this army.

Halleck to Meade July 14:

My telegram stating the disappointment of the President at the escape of Lee's army was not intended as a censure, but as a stimulus to an active pursuit. It is not deemed a sufficient cause for your application to be relieved.

APPENDIX D

LETTER FROM GENERAL McCLELLAN TO GENERAL MEADE ON
HIS VICTORY AT GETTYSBURG, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF
JULY 21, 1863. SEE PAGE 136, VOL. II

NEW YORK, *July 11, 1863.*

MY DEAR GENERAL:

I have abstained from writing to you simply because I hear that you have no time to read letters—but I will say a word now, anyhow.

I wish to offer you my sincere and heartfelt congratulations upon the glorious victory you have achieved, and the splendid way in which you assumed control of our noble old army under such trying circumstances.

You have done all that could be done and the Army of the Potomac has supported you nobly. I don't know that, situated as I am, my opinion is worth much to any of you—but I can trust saying that I feel very proud of you and my old Army. I don't flatter myself that your work is over—I believe that you have another severe battle to fight, but I am confident that you will win.

That God may bless you and your army in its future conflicts is the prayer of

Your sincere friend

GEO. B. McCLELLAN.

MAJ. GEN'L G. G. MEADE
Comd. Army of Potomac.

APPENDIX E

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, GENERAL MEADE'S SPEECH OF ACCEPTANCE OF SWORD PRESENTED BY THE DIVISION OF "PENNSYLVANIA RESERVES," AUGUST 28, 1863, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF AUGUST 31, 1863. SEE PAGE 145, VOL. II

(New York Tribune, August 31, 1863)

Gen. Crawford, and Officers of the Division of Pennsylvania Reserve Corps: I accept this sword with feelings of profound gratitude and with just pride. I should be insensible to all the generous feelings of humanity, if I were not proud and grateful at receiving a testimonial of approbation from a band of officers and men so distinguished as has been the Division of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps during the whole period of this war. I have a right, therefore, to be proud that such a body of soldiers should think my conduct, and my course, of such a character as to justify them in collecting together here so many distinguished gentlemen as I see around me from different parts of the country, and particularly our own State, to present to me, this handsome testimonial, which is no more than saying, I have done my duty toward them. From the very commencement of my connection with that corps as Commander of the Second Brigade, in the Fall of 1861, it was my earnest desire to do my duty by officers and men, and I faithfully endeavored, during the time I commanded them, to discharge my duty toward them as to men entitled to every consideration for the manner in which they had performed their services to their country. I am very glad that you have mentioned the distinguished gentleman present, the Governor of Penn.; I have a personal knowledge of his efforts to raise this corps, and, after it was raised and organized, to see that all its interests were attended to upon every occasion. I have been with him many times as he visited the men and officers, with a zeal that never tired, to see that all their wants were supplied, and to stir them up to renewed exertion by his patriotic and manly eloquence. I am, therefore, glad that you have been able to witness this presentation from Pennsylvania soldiers, and I hope that the citizens of Pennsylvania have appreciated and will remember his services in promoting the interest of our country and suppressing this Rebellion. [Applause.] In speaking of the pride with which I receive a sword from this division, I feel justified, though it may seem egotistic, in saying a few words of the service rendered by the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps: and I say unhesitatingly before this large assembly, and in view of the history of the War, which will vindicate my words, there is no division in the Army of the Potomac, glorious as I consider it, which can claim greater credit for gallant and laborious service than the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps. [Applause.] In this, Sir, I take no credit to myself. It is not my own personal services, but the services of the soldiers of which I speak—the gallantry of the privates of the Pennsylvania Corps. I have only to appeal to Dranesville—the first success that

crowned the arms of the Army of the Potomac—which was gained by the unaided gallantry of one brigade of this division; I have only to refer to Mechanicsville, where the whole of Longstreet's Corps was held in check for several hours and a victory achieved by two brigades alone of the Pennsylvania Corps. [Cheers.] I have only to allude to New Market Cross Roads, sometimes called Glendale, to which I refer most emphatically, because some of the most distinguished officers of this army, ignorant of the facts and misled by information received at the time, but which subsequently proved incorrect, have brought grave charges against this Division. Upon that field I stood by this Corps till dark, when it pleased God I should be shot down. It has been said that this Corps ran from that field, but I stood there with them and saw them fighting in their places until darkness fell upon the field, and at the time I was borne away my men were engaged in a hand-to-hand contest with the batteries of the enemy; and although there were men who left the field, as there are always cowards in every army and every division, yet the large body of this gallant Corps, remained there steadily facing the enemy until dark. They never ran away; and the two guns said to be taken from them by the enemy were in fact left the next day, abandoned by our army, and not captured from the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps. I will also point to South Mountain, of which it is not necessary to say much, for the gallantry of the Reserve Corps in ascending that height, and turning the left wing of the enemy, was recognized by the commander and is known to all the country; of Antietam, where they commenced the attack on the 16th of September, and unaided took such of the Confederate batteries as were in their front and held their position until next morning, when the battle was renewed; again of Fredericksburg, where this division alone and unaided advanced to the attack, drove the enemy from their position, and held for twenty minutes a position on those heights which, if they had been sufficiently supported and enabled to hold, would have given us a victory. [Cheers.] Have I not, then, a right to be justly proud, when the officers and men of a command, which have performed such services, which I now declare to be truth and fact, present me with this testimonial? I think I have a right to be proud and grateful, and I feel a proportionate pride and gratitude to-day. But while I express this pride and gratitude, it is not unmingled with mournful feelings. When I look around and reflect how many of the gallant officers and brave soldiers who originally composed this Corps are now sleeping their sleep in lonely battlefields, and how many others are now limping over the country mutilated cripples, I cannot but be saddened to think that your glorious achievement should be attended with such misfortune; that this fair country, which should be resting in peace and flowing with milk and honey, is disturbed and desolated by intestine war; that our arms, in preserving the integrity of the country, should have been compelled to enact the scenes I have witnessed. This testimonial, gratifying as it is under the circumstances, suggests many sad thoughts. At the same time I feel that I, and all the rest of you, are doing only our duty, acting from the highest impulses of the heart. It must not be—

it is impossible—that this Government should be divided; that there should be two Governments and two flags on this continent. Every man of you, I am sure, is willing to sacrifice his life in vindication of the principle that our Government must be preserved as it was handed down to us, and but one flag shall wave over the whole territory, which shall be called the Republic of the United States. [Prolonged cheers.] Like you, I remember, sadly, mournfully, the names of the fallen. I am sorry that I cannot now recall the roll of honor of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps. There is one—your former commander, first of brigade and then of division, one of the noblest souls among men, one of the most accomplished officers of this army—Major-General John F. Reynolds, I cannot receive this sword without thinking of that officer, and the heroic manner in which he met his fate in front at Gettysburg. There I lost, not only a lieutenant most important to me in his services, but a friend and brother. When I think, too, of others fallen—of McNeill and Taylor, of the Rifles; of Simmons, of the Fifth; of DeHone of Massachusetts; of young Kuhn, who came from Philadelphia and assisted me so efficiently, and many more who are gone, I am saddened by the recollection. It is more oppressive to go over the names of those who have been sacrificed. I wish I could mention the names of all the soldiers, but it would be a long, long list, that would include the names of all those from the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps who are now resting in honorable graves or crippled and mutilated in the service of their country. I thank you, Sir, for the kind manner in which you have conveyed to me this elegant testimonial, and to all those gentlemen, who have come so far to be present on this occasion, I am extremely grateful. I trust that this sword will be required but a short time longer. Events now look as if this unhappy war might soon be brought to a termination. All I can say to those gentlemen who have come here, is to earnestly entreat them on their return home to spare no effort to let the people know that all we want is men—men to fill up our thinned ranks. Give us the numbers, and in a short time I think the people on the other side will be satisfied that the result is inevitable, that it is only a question of time, and, seeing that we are bringing to bear the numbers which are required, they will themselves yield. Before I close, let me add what I had intended to say before, but it escaped my memory until this moment, an expression of my gratification that I heard that on the field of Gettysburg the division of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, under your command, enacted deeds worthy of its former reputation, and proved that there was no change whatever in the division—deeds which I feel satisfied will always be achieved by them while the division is composed of such officers and men. Thanking you again for this testimonial, and for the kind manner in which it has been conveyed to me, I will here conclude my remarks. [Renewed applause.]

APPENDIX F

EXTRACT FROM NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, ATTACK ON GENERAL
MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 5, 1863.
SEE PAGE 147, VOL. II

(*Wilkes' Spirit of the Times* of August 29, 1863)

SINGULAR REVELATIONS

IN REGARD TO

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

(The following letter comes from a distinguished military writer who has had much observation in the Army of the Potomac, and whose opinions we can assure the readers of the *Spirit* are well worth noting. It was written to a personal friend in this city, and from his hands we obtain it.)

WASHINGTON, August 16, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:

The Army of the Potomac—that army which has so often elevated men from mediocrity into greatness—that army which has marched, fought and bled to no purpose—now lies in sweet repose along the line of the Rappahannock, patiently waiting, as Micawber says, “for something to turn up.” The history of this army is one of barren toil, suffering and death. Its successes are magnified by venal letter-writers into great victories, and its defeats are represented as splendid strokes of strategy. It is thus that a confiding people have been humbugged from month to month, and year to year. History can furnish no instance that will even remotely compare with this army for gross ignorance and mismanagement. In no instance has success been followed up with vigorous and rapid blows; on the contrary, the enemy have been allowed to retreat without molestation, until they had time to rally their scattered forces and fortify themselves. The battle of Gettysburg was purely defensive, and our success was mainly due to the natural strength of our position, to our artillery, and the firmness of a portion of the troops, but in no degree to the strategy or ability displayed by any of the generals, from the senior down.

Here indeed, was an opportunity for a general to have shown the qualities of an able commander, if he possessed them. His troops, however decimated, had, by his own account, suffered far less than the enemy. But his army, flushed with victory, was not permitted to follow up and harass a beaten, dispirited and demoralized enemy, hampered with a vast amount of plunder, thousands of wounded, and an impassable river obstructing their retreat; and while letter-writers were announcing their hopelessness of its escape, Lee's army was quickly making arrangements for crossing without the slightest interruption from Gen.

Meade, or serious effort to penetrate his design. Suggestions were made and heard, to send a force above the rebel position, *when by cutting trees and throwing them into the river, his pontoons or other bridges might be swept away.* But Gen. Meade's frequently declared belief was, that Lee could cross when he pleased; that he did not intend to cross, but meant to fight. The sequel shows how completely he was deceived. Had Gen. Meade possessed the activity of either Grant or Rosecrans, and, I may add, of Hooker, he could, by a cavalry reconnaissance on the south side of the Potomac, and a forced one on the Maryland side, have easily discovered Lee's true intentions; and had he attacked him with his army divided by that river, he must have inevitably destroyed or captured one half of it. But blinded and deceived by Lee, timidity ruled the hour, and the golden opportunity, that is only to be seen and grasped by genius, was lost forever. Here, then, we have a commander but a few days previous magnified into a great general, for his success in a battle which he was forced, in defence, to fight; which was due alone to the natural strength of his position, and the courage of the rank and file, and not, as I have before said, to any display of his military abilities. And yet, when an occasion was subsequently presented for the exercise of his qualities as a commander, he tranquilly sits down before a hastily constructed gutter (mis-called entrenchments) for a week, and quietly permits the enemy to prepare for and cross a formidable stream that barred his retreat. Who can estimate the future sacrifice of life that must ensue from this terrible mistake?

The public must have news to feed upon. It matters not, it would seem, whether it be true or false; and hence they will hear before long of some remarkable things that are soon to take place, which they are not at liberty to reveal. But it may as well make up its mind that the *Army of the Potomac will never accomplish anything.* With some few exceptions, it is the worst handled body of men, so far as the general officers are concerned, that the world has ever seen. This is, in a great measure, due to the accursed political influence that has blighted and almost destroyed its energy and efficiency. It is due, also, to the many commanders outside the army proper, who have restrained and controlled its action on more than one important occasion, from the President down; and above all, it is due to the many ignorant and self-sufficient politicians who have been appointed to high commands, *and the large infusion of foreign adventurers into the different staffs.*

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APPENDIX G

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED
IN LETTER OF DECEMBER 28, 1863. SEE PAGE 164, VOL. II

(*Wilkes' Spirit of the Times*, December 28, 1863)

(From the *Washington Republican*)

BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG—HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE

General Halleck, in his report of the operations of our armies in the field during the past year, in commenting upon the Battle of Gettysburg, says: "To General Meade belonged the honor of a well-earned victory, in one of the greatest and best fought battles of the war."

As a public journalist, we cannot allow such a record to be made in the face of the well-known history of the battle of Gettysburg, now made classic by the eloquence of Everett, and in view of the important part the gallant Hooker and his chief of staff performed preliminary to, and during the battle, without entering our solemn protest against it. And in doing this, we do not mean to detract in the slightest degree from the reputation and honor of General Meade.

It is a matter of history that the army of the Potomac was never in finer drill, or better discipline, or more thoroughly in "fighting trim" than it was when it fought at Gettysburg. So much to the credit of General Hooker.

It is a matter of history that when the advance column of the rebel army was within a day's march of the capital of Pennsylvania, and the main body of the rebel army was in Maryland, following the advances, Lee, supposing that he had out-generaled Hooker, and made sure of Baltimore and Washington, was startled to find Hooker across the Potomac and right on his flank. So much to the credit of the latter.

It is a matter of history that when General Hooker was about to direct some of the troops in the field (on Maryland Heights) under his command to prepare for a blow upon Lee's flank, before the latter could contract his lines, which would have resulted in *cutting the rebel army in two*, Hooker's plans were interrupted by the general-in-chief, and at his (Hooker's) own request, feeling justly indignant at the treatment he had received, he was relieved. General Lee, in his report to Jeff Davis, acknowledges he was outflanked and outgeneraled by Hooker. So much to the credit of the latter.

It is a matter of history that when General Butterfield made out his line of marches in Maryland, he was directed by Hooker to keep well to the right in order to cover Baltimore, intending thereby to force Lee to fight at Gettysburg or thereabouts. So much to the credit of Hooker.

It is a matter of history that Hooker had formed a general plan of battle: that his Chief of Staff had that plan; that Gen. Meade knew it;

that, as Hooker's successor, Meade had not only the benefit of Hooker's plans and *necessarily acted upon them*, but he also had Hooker's Chief of Staff (Gen. Butterfield) by his side constantly, and, if General Hooker dislikes to acknowledge the facts briefly cited above in his report, it does not detract any the less from the gentlemanly and soldierlike conduct of Gen. Meade, who, immediately after the battle of Gettysburg, in a personal letter to Gen. Butterfield, *acknowledged his great indebtedness to that officer for his valuable aid*, without which, he stated, *he could not have succeeded*. Gen. Butterfield knew all of Hooker's plans, and was instructed by the latter to communicate them freely to Gen. Meade, *and we happen to know that Gen. Meade received them, acted upon them, and, after the battle, like a true gentleman, acknowledged his gratitude*. So much to the credit of Gen. Hooker.

It is not a matter of history, but it is a matter of the plainest common sense, that neither Gen. Meade or any other military chieftain living could have taken the Army of the Potomac, and in so short a time have it well enough "in hand" to hurl it successfully against such a witty, well organized, and well led host, *without aid from his immediate predecessor*.

Gen. Meade can ask for no higher honor than that which he acquired by winning such a victory over the best disciplined army the rebels have in the field, in a series of battles which commenced only about forty-eight hours after he assumed command of the Army of the Potomac, *even upon the plans of another!*

Mr. Everett, in his oration at Gettysburg, did not fail to do Gen. Hooker justice; nor did Gen. Lee, the leader of the crestfallen and defeated rebel army. We regret the more, therefore, that the General-in-Chief of the army of the United States, in making up an official report, which is now a part of the history of the present war, and to whom the country looks for a faithful chronicler of passing military events, should have omitted to do so, especially in view of the signal service Gen. Hooker has recently rendered by his dashing and daring exploits in the mountain fastnesses of the west, astonishing, even the peerless Grant, who promptly awarded to "Fighting Joe" and his brave troops the credit so justly due to him and them. Honor to whom it is due.

APPENDIX H

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 9, 1864. SEE PAGE 176, VOL. II

FROM WASHINGTON

(Special Dispatch to the *N. Y. Tribune*)

WASHINGTON, *Monday, March 7, 1864.*

GEN. MEADE AND THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

The points made before the War Investigating Committee against Gen. Meade, who is substantially on trial before this congressional Commission, by the testimony of Gens. Sickles and Doubleday, are, that he gave and promulgated an order to his army to retreat from Gettysburg at the close of the first day's fight, when his superior strength, his advantage of position, and the honor and interests of the country, required him to give battle; that, in the forenoon of the second day's fight—Thursday—he gave another order to retreat, but which was not promulgated in writing; that he had made no dispositions for battle that day, had no plan for fighting, and seemingly no purpose to fight, but that the battle was precipitated by Gen. Sickles, and forced on Meade in part by the enemy, but principally by General Sickles, that Meade did not know on Friday night that our men had whipped Lee, or distrusted the fact that night, and was so uncertain of it on Saturday that he dared not pursue the beaten enemy, and weakly and ignorantly threw away the certainty of capture or destroying the entire Rebel army; that for a few moments he yielded to persuasions to let the 3d Corps pursue, but countermanded the order to do so in ten minutes after it was given, saying, alluding to the Rebels, "Oh, let them go;" that Meade's subsequent representation that he was not in condition to pursue was not true; that his army was abundantly able and in condition to make immediate pursuit, and, if necessary, to fight and crush Lee's disordered columns; that the 6th Corps was fresh and substantially intact; it had lost only 100 men, the 12th Corps had lost only 700 and had about 12,000 left, the 3d Corps had 6,000 men left and prayed to be permitted to pursue; the whole of the cavalry, 10,000 was intact and fresh. Gen. French had at Frederick 10,000 veterans in perfect condition, and Couch's great force was also at Meade's call. That, in a word, he had over 40,000 effective and ardent troops with which to pursue and destroy Lee's flying and demoralized army, but refused to use them and suffered the enemy to escape. It is upon the question of the issuance of the second order to retreat that Gen. Butterfield has been summoned.

In the committee room it is understood that the origin of the effort made by Gen. Meade to break up the Third Corps to the waste of its

esprit, and the discontent of every man and officer in it, and dissatisfaction with the service, was the refusal of the corps to subscribe to the McClellan testimonial.

It is stated that testimony can be added to convict Gen. Meade of expressing the opinion that we cannot subdue the Rebels. Gens. Birney and Pleasonton, examined before the War Committee to-day, told the remarkable story of the war councils called during and after the battle of Gettysburg, and exhibited the strength and efficiency of the army the morning after the last day's fight. The testimony of both these Generals was very damaging.

APPENDIX I

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, IN FAVOR OF GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 15, 1864. SEE PAGE 180, VOL. II

(The Round Table, A Weekly Record of the Notable, the Useful and the Tasteful)
(New York, Saturday, March 12, 1864)

OUGHT GENERAL MEADE TO BE REMOVED ?

This question is now absorbing the attention of the authorities at Washington, and soon will be, if it is not already, decided. The fatality that has attached to every commander of the brave Army of the Potomac has affixed itself to General Meade. The movement against him, at first only whispered among a few discontented subordinates in the army, has at last reached the capital, and has attained the dignity—if dignity it be—of an open opposition. The main movers appear to be General Daniel E. Sickles and the new Committee on the Conduct of the War. It is urged that General Meade is too slow; that but for the dash of some of his division commanders the victory at Gettysburg would have been a cowardly retreat; that he erred in not following up Lee immediately after that battle; and that since that time he has let slip more than one opportunity of adding new laurels to those of which the Army of the Potomac cherish an honorable pride. Such, in brief, are the charges against General Meade.

It is well known that, in his report of the battle of Gettysburg, General Meade indirectly censured General Sickles for advancing farther than he had authority to do by virtue of his orders, and so not only subjected his corps to severe loss, but rendered the extrication of it from the difficulty in which it was thereby involved no easy task. Whether General Sickles intentionally disobeyed or unintentionally misinterpreted his orders, was not distinctly stated. But one thing is certain, that the fact that General Sickles lost a leg in the engagement saved him from removal from the army. We honor General Sickles for the devotion to the cause of

his country; we honor him for the untiring energy and personal bravery he has displayed in its defense; and when the war shall be ended and the roll of honor made out, we shall not be the last to claim for General Sickles no mean place on it. But we cannot blink the fact that General Sickles is quite as much a politician as a soldier. We know that he has accomplished more by personal address, adroitness, and cunning management of newspaper correspondents, than by actual display of military ability. * * * He is not a man to forget a fancied slight or to lose an opportunity of resenting it. In view of this, we are at no loss to account for his hostility to General Meade. As to the Committee on the Conduct of the War, the less that is said of it the better. So much for General Meade's accusers.

Concerning General Meade, we presume no one will deny that he is a high-minded gentleman and a thorough soldier. All his dispatches and reports show that he has the instincts of a gentleman; and since he has been in the command of the Army of the Potomac he has won one great battle, has obtained several smaller successes, and has suffered no great disaster. As regards the battle of Gettysburg, the fate of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, and perhaps of the nation itself, depended upon him, and with this in mind he had no business to take any risks. We see now how a pursuit of Lee immediately after the battle might have proved advantageous; but General Meade could not feel sure of it then, and under the circumstances he ought not to have undertaken the pursuit unless he was certain of its proving successful.

As a strategist and a tactician, General Meade has displayed no ordinary military ability. His disposition of his troops at Gettysburg has yet to be questioned, while the various movements he has planned since then, though not ending in the results which were hoped for, have stamped him as an able general. His retreat in the valley of the Shenandoah, when outflanked by Lee, was more than redeemed by the fact that he captured a number of rebel prisoners, which is, we believe, the only instance in the war in which a retreating force not only saved itself, but captured no small portion of its pursuers. Indeed, the rebels acknowledge this. The retreat from Mine Run, though it was to be regretted, reflected but little on General Meade, for his plan of the movement was proved to have been good, despite the failure in its execution.

Besides, the present is not a time for the removal of a general in command of so important an army, unless his faults be much greater than any that can be proved of General Meade. The spring campaign is about to open—who is better fitted to lead the Army of the Potomac than he who led it to victory at Gettysburg, and has since kept its honor bright? We have changed commanders too often; with the exception of General Meade, each change has been for the worse. We tried Burnside, Pope, Hooker, and found each of them wanting. There was no victory between those of Antietam and Gettysburg. It is due to the general who won the latter that he should have a chance to share the honors of the triumphs which we hope are awaiting our armies in the coming campaign. This is no time for experiments. And so long as we have got a good

commander—one, too, who has proved himself such—we should stand by him; certainly we should not remove him to gratify the pique of any man or any set of men. General Grant was given a fair trial after the disaster at Belmont and Shiloh. Shall not as much be granted to General Meade, who as yet has met with no disaster?

APPENDIX J

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, SIGNED "HISTORICUS," ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 15, 1864.
SEE PAGE 180, VOL. II

(New York *Herald*, March 12, 1864)

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION FROM AN EYE-WITNESS

HOW THE VICTORY WAS WON AND HOW ITS ADVANTAGES WERE LOST

GENERALS HALLECK'S AND MEADE'S OFFICIAL REPORTS REFUTED
&C., &C., &C.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Herald*:

The Battle of Gettysburg is the decisive battle of this war. It not only saved the Capital from invasion, but turned the tide of victory in our favor. The opinion of Europe on the failure of the rebellion dates from this great conflict. How essential then, that its real history should be known. Up to this moment no clear narrative has appeared. The sketches of the press, the reports of Generals Halleck and Meade and the oration of Mr. Everett give only phases of this terrible struggle, and that not very correctly. To supply this hiatus I send you a connected, and I hope, lucid review of its main features. I have not ventured to touch on the thrilling incidents and affecting details of such a strife, but have confined myself to a succinct relation of its principal events and the actors therein. My only motive is to vindicate history, do honor to the fallen and justice to the survivors when unfairly impeached.

General Meade took command of the Army of the Potomac, on Sunday, the 28th of June, at Frederick, Maryland. On Monday, as he states, the army was put in motion, and by Tuesday night the right flank had reached Manchester and the left occupied Emmettsburg. General Buford's cavalry had advanced as far as Gettysburg, and reported that the Confederate army was debouching from the mountains on the Cashtown road. Upon this intelligence General Reynolds was ordered to advance on Gettysburg with the First and Eleventh corps, which he reached early on the 7th of July, and found Buford's cavalry already engaged with the enemy—the corps of General Hill. Rapidly

making his dispositions, General Reynolds joined in the conflict, and soon fell mortally wounded. The command of the field then devolved on General Howard, of the Eleventh corps, who maintained his position till about 2 o'clock P. M., when the enemy was heavily reinforced by the arrival of Ewell's corps. The battle now raged fearfully, between Hill's and Ewell's corps on one side and the First and Eleventh corps on the other, till about 4 P. M., when General Howard was compelled to yield to the superior numbers of the enemy and fall back, losing many prisoners—nearly four thousand—to the South side of Gettysburg. His position was eminently critical, when, to the great relief of both the General and our valiant troops, a division of the Third corps, under the immediate command of General Sickles, arrived, and the fighting for that day was at an end. It should be mentioned that the Third corps was stationed at Emmetsburg, by order of General Meade, with a view to protect that important point; but information continuing to reach General Sickles that the First and Eleventh Corps were in great danger,¹ he decided to assume the grave responsibility of moving to their relief without orders. Leaving two brigades at Emmetsburg, he made a forced march of ten miles, in spite of the heat and dust, in three hours, and had the satisfaction to be hailed by General Howard on his reaching the field with the flattering phrase, "Here you are,—always reliable, always first"—A generous tribute from one soldier to another. General Slocum, of the First [Twelfth] corps, had arrived a short time before, but his corps was then some four miles distant. In the early part of the evening (Wednesday) a conference of the leading generals took place, when some insisted on falling back towards Taneytown, while others urged the expediency of maintaining their present position, as offering rare advantages for the inevitable and decisive contest that must occur on the following day. It appears that General Meade had issued a circular (of which I saw several copies) on the morning of Wednesday, July 1, to all his commanders, stating that his advance had accomplished all the objects contemplated—namely, the relief of Harrisburg and Philadelphia—and that he would now desist altogether from the offensive. He proposed to post the whole army in line of battle on Pipe Creek, the right flank resting on Manchester and the left on Middleburg, involving a new change of front, and there await the movements of the enemy. The position which General Meade had selected for the final struggle between the two armies was some fifteen miles distant from Gettysburg, where fate willed that it should occur. Whether this important circular ordering him to fall back reached the lamented Reynolds before he became engaged at Gettysburg it is difficult to say. It could not have failed to reach General Sickles, but he happily determined to push on to the rescue of the First and Eleventh corps, already engaged. It is strange that General Meade

¹ Besides numerous reports, the following brief communication reached me, which accidentally fell into my hands:—"July 1, Gettysburg, General Sickles:—General Doubleday, (First corps) says for God's sake come up with all speed, they are pressing us hard.

"H. T. LEE, LT., A. D. C."

should make no mention in his report of this singular and most important fact: That he issued a plan of campaign on Wednesday, July 1, directing his whole army to retire and take up the defensive on Pipe Creek almost at the moment that his left flank was fiercely struggling with the right wing of the enemy. This proves how often the plans of a general are frustrated by unlooked for contingencies.

General Meade broke up his headquarters at Taneytown, as he states, at eleven p. m. on Wednesday, and reached Gettysburg at one a. m. Thursday, July 2. Early in the morning he set to work examining the position of the various army corps. It is hardly true to say that he imitated the example of all prudent commanders on the eve of the battle and made a complete survey of the ground he occupied.

It was on these occasions that the genius of the First Napoleon revealed itself; for at a glance he saw the advantages of his own position and the assailable point of the enemy. It seems that General Lee was somewhat more astute than Meade in this; for in his report he states what he deemed "the most favorable point" for his attack. "In front of General Longstreet" (opposite our left wing), Lee remarks, "the enemy held a position from which, if he could be driven, it was thought our army could be used to advantage in assailing the more elevated ground beyond and thus enable us to reach the crest of the ridge. That officer, then, was directed to carry this position." It is plain enough that Lee regarded the point where our left was posted as the key to our position, and if that could be taken from us our defeat was inevitable. It is not to be supposed that General Meade refused to see this, but as he makes no mention of it in his report I propose, for the sake of the future historian of the battle to tell what I know about it.

Near this important ground was posted the valiant Third corps, and its commander, General Sickles, saw at once how necessary it was to occupy the elevated ground in his front towards the Emmettsburg road, and to extend his lines to the commanding eminence, known as the Roundtop, or Sugarloaf Hill. Unless this were done the left and rear of our army would be in the greatest danger. Sickles concluded that no time was to be lost, as he observed the enemy massing large bodies of troops on their right (our left). Receiving no orders, and filled with anxiety, he reported in person to General Meade and urged the advance he deemed so essential. "Oh," said Meade, "generals are apt to look for the attack to be made where they are." Whether this was a jest or a sneer Sickles did not stop to consider, but begged Meade to go over the ground with him instantly, but the commander-in-chief declined this on account of other duties. Yielding, however to the prolonged solicitations of Sickles, General Meade desired General Hunt, chief of artillery, to accompany Sickles and report the result of their reconnoissance. Hunt concurred with Sickles as to the line to be occupied—the advance line from the left of the Second corps to Roundtop Hill—but he declined to give any orders until he had reported to General Meade, remarking, however, that he (General Sickles) would doubtless receive orders immediately.

Two P. M. came, and yet no orders. Why was this? Other orders than those expected by General Sickles were, it appears, in preparation at headquarters. It has since been stated, upon unquestionable authority, that General Meade had decided upon a retreat, and that an order to withdraw from the position held by our enemy was penned by his chief of staff, General Butterfield, though happily its promulgation never took place. This order is probably on record in the Adjutant General's Office.

Meanwhile the enemy's columns were moving rapidly around to our left and rear. These facts were again reported to headquarters, but brought no response. Buford's cavalry had been massed on the left, covering that flank with outposts, and videttes were thrown forward on the Emmetsburg road. While waiting the expected orders Sickles made good use of his time in levelling all the fences and stone walls, so as to facilitate the movements of his troops and to favor the operations of the cavalry. What, then, was the surprise of Sickles to see of a sudden all the cavalry withdrawn, leaving his flank entirely exposed. He sent an earnest remonstrance to General Meade, whose reply was that he did not intend to withdraw the cavalry, and that a part of this division (Buford) should be sent back. It never returned. Under these circumstances Sickles threw forward three regiments of light troops as skirmishers and for outpost duty. The critical moment had now arrived. The enemy's movements indicated their purpose to seize Round-top Hill, and its entire position. General Longstreet would have had easy work in coming up our left wing. To prevent this disaster Sickles waited no longer for orders from General Meade, but directed General Hobart Ward's brigade and Smith's battery (Fourth New York) to secure that available position, and at the same time advance on his line of battle about three hundred yards, so as to hold the crest in his front. He extended his left to support Ward and cover the threatened rear of the army.

These dispositions were made in the very face of the enemy, who were advancing in columns of attack, and Sickles dreaded lest the conflict should open before his dispositions were completed. At this juncture he was summoned to report in person at headquarters to attend a council of corps commanders. His preparations were of such moment to the attack so near that General Sickles delayed attending the council, while giving all of his attention to the carrying out of his orders. A second peremptory summons came from General Meade, and, leaving his unfinished task to the active supervision of General Birney and General Humphreys, Sickles rode off to the rear to headquarters. Before he had reached there the sound of cannon announced that the battle had begun. Hastening rapidly on, he was met by General Meade at the door of his headquarters, who said, "General, I will not ask you to dismount, the enemy are engaging your fronts, the council is over." It was an unfortunate moment, as it proved, for a council of war. Sickles, putting spurs to his horse, flew back to his command, and, finding that Graham's brigade was in advance as far as he desired, he was pushing that brigade and a battery forward about one hundred yards, when

General Meade at length arrived on the field. The following colloquy ensued, which I gathered from several officers present: "Are you not too much extended, General," said Meade. "Can you hold this front?" "Yes," replied Sickles, "until more troops are brought up, the enemy are attacking in force, and I shall need support." General Meade then let drop some remark, showing that his mind was still wavering as to the extent of the ground covered by the Third corps. Sickles replied, "General, I have received no orders. I have made these dispositions to the best of my judgment. Of course I shall be happy to modify them according to your views." "No," said Meade, "I will send you the Fifth corps, and you may send for support from the Second corps." "I shall need more artillery," added Sickles. "Send for all you want," replied Meade, "to the artillery reserve. I will direct General Hunt to send you all you ask for." The conference was then abruptly terminated by a heavy shower of shells. Sickles received no further orders that day. There is no doubt I may venture to add, that Sickles' line was too much extended for the number of troops under his command, but his great aim was to prevent the enemy getting down his flank to the Roundtop alluded to. This was worth the risk, in his opinion, of momentarily weakening his lines. The contest now going on was of the most fierce and sanguinary description. The entire right wing of the enemy was concentrated on the defeated Third corps, for the object of Lee, as he states, was "to carry" the ground which Sickles occupied, and which both generals evidently regarded as of the highest importance. While this terrific combat was raging on our left, Lee ordered Ewell "to attack" our right wing and Hill to threaten our centre, both with the object, as he says in his report, "to divert reinforcements from reaching our left," which, as we have seen, Longstreet was "directed to carry." Well may General Meade in his report say: "The Third corps sustained the shock most heroically, and he reached the disputed point just in time to prevent its falling into the enemy's hands. Considering our force unequal to the exigency, Sickles called on the heroic troops of the Second corps, for support, and they gave it with a will. The struggle now became deadly. The columns of Longstreet charged with reckless fury upon our troops, but they were met with a valor and stern fortitude that defied their utmost efforts. An alarming incident, however, occurred. Barnes' division, of the Fifth corps, suddenly gave way, and Sickles, seeing this, put a battery in position to check the enemy if he broke through this gap on our front, and General Birney was sent to order Barnes back into line. "No," he said, "impossible. It is too hot. My men cannot stand it." Remonstrance was unavailing, and Sickles despatched his aides to bring up any troops they met to fill this blank. Major Tremaine, of his staff, fell in with General Zook at the head of his brigade (Second corps), and this gallant officer instantly volunteered to take Barnes' place. When they reached the ground Barnes' disordered troops impeded the advance of the brigade. "If you can't get out of the way," cried Zook, "lie down and I will march over you." Barnes ordered his men to lie down, and the chivalric Zook and his splendid brigade, under the

personal direction of General Birney, did march over them and right into the breach. Alas! poor Zook soon fell, mortally wounded, and half of his brigade perished with him: it was about this time—near seven P. M.—that Sickles was struck by a cannon ball that tore off his right leg, and he was borne from the field.

It was now pretty clear that General Meade had awakened to the fact which he treated with such indifference when pressed on him by Sickles in the morning—that our left was the assailable point, if not the key to our position, for he began to pour in reinforcements, whose presence in the beginning of the action, would have saved thousands of lives. "Perceiving great exertions on the part of the enemy," says Meade's report, "the Sixth corps (Sedgwick's) and part of the First corps (Newton's) Lockwood's Maryland Brigade, together with detachments from the Second corps, were all brought up at different periods, and succeeded, together with the gallant resistance of the Fifth corps, in checking and finally repulsing the assault of the enemy, who retired in confusion and disorder about sunset, and ceased any further efforts." If this remarkable concentration of troops was necessary, at last, to save the left of our army, it is almost incredible that the single corps of General Sickles was able to withstand the impetuous onset of Longstreet's legions for nearly an hour before any succor reached it.

On Friday, July 3, the enemy renewed their efforts to carry out the original design of Lee, by overthrowing our left wing, and Longstreet was reinforced by Pickett's three brigades, and further supported by one division and two brigades from Hill's corps.

In addition to this heavy mass of infantry the entire artillery of the rebel army was concentrated against our left. After his oversight of the day, it may be supposed that General Meade was better prepared to defend his left, and had made adequate preparations. About one P. M. the enemy opened a furious cannonade upon our left and left centre, which continued some two hours, with occasional responses from us. At about three P. M. the enemy moved forward in columns, and once more essayed to carry our position on the left. It was during this conflict that General Hancock, commander of the Second corps, a gallant soldier and accomplished officer, was wounded by a musket ball and obliged to retire. He contributed greatly by his energy and valor to the success of the day. Meanwhile our artillery opened with vigor and inflicted great damage. After a severe and prolonged struggle the enemy at length fell back and abandoned the contest. "Owing to the strength of the enemy's position," says Lee's report, "and the reduction of our ammunition, a renewal of the engagement could not be hazarded." Hence it is plain that our good fortune in preserving our position on the left gave us the victory at Gettysburg, and yet General Meade, not having sufficiently examined the ground before the battle, disregarded the repeated warnings of the sagacious officer, General Sickles, as well as the report of his own general of artillery, General Hunt, who concurred in all the suggestions of the commander of the Third corps. Without meaning to do injustice to General Meade, it must be admitted that his report of this

great battle is at such variance with all the statements which have appeared in the press, that it is due not only to history, but to the indomitable prowess of our heroic army, that every fact sustained by concurrent testimony should be given in order to fully establish the truth. I reserve for any suitable occasion, abundant documentary evidence to support the facts furnished.

On Saturday, July 4, both armies continued to face each other during the entire day, without either manifesting a disposition to attack. "The enemy," says Meade, "drew back his left flank, but maintained his position in front of our left," as if always conscious that our vulnerable point was there, and they were loth to retire from it. On the night of the 4th, Lee, finding his ammunition exhausted and his subsistence imperilled, decided to withdraw, and he began his retreat towards Williamsport, with four thousand of our prisoners and all his immense trains. On the morning of the 5th this event became known, and General Meade despatched the Sixth corps in pursuit, together with some squadrons of cavalry. "The 5th and 6th of July were employed," says Meade's report, "in succoring the wounded and burying the dead." The enemy made good use of all this precious time in pushing on towards Williamsport, as rapidly as possible, and it was fortunate for them that detachments were not detailed for these solemn and affecting duties, and that our whole army was not launched in prompt and eager pursuit. They were burdened by heavy trains filled with plunder, without ammunition, and wofully demoralized. Had the half of our army, flushed with success, fallen on them in flank or rear, or anywhere or anyhow, General Lee might have got across the Potomac, but his army never. "The trains, with the wounded and prisoners," says Lee's report, "were compelled to await at Williamsport (about the 8th of July) the subsiding of the river and the construction of boats. * * * the enemy had not yet made his appearance." The rebel army must have trembled with anxiety lest the dreaded Yankees should heave in sight before they could escape from the swollen Potomac, which Providence seemed to have destined as the place of their surrender. It was not until the 12th of July that our army, too long delayed, came up, but, unfortunately, the enemy had nearly finished their preparations for flight. "An attack," says Lee, "was awaited during that and the succeeding day. This did not take place, though the two armies were in close proximity." Why it did not take place the country has never yet understood. General Meade in his report gives no explanation. The press of the day stated that General Meade again held councils of war at this supreme moment, and that several of his generals opposed following on the crippled enemy. All we know is that Lee, having completed his preparations, slipped quietly over the river on the morning of the 14th. "The crossing was not completed until one P. M.," says Lee, "when the bridge was removed. The enemy offered no serious interruption, and the movement was continued with no loss of material except a few disabled wagons and two pieces of artillery, which the horses were unable to drag through the deep mud." It seems that General Meade and the recalcitrant members of the coun-

cil of war finally made up their minds to attack. "Before advancing on the morning of the 14th," reports General Meade, "it was ascertained he (the enemy) had retired the night previous by the bridge at Falling Waters and the ford at Williamsport."

In striking confirmation of the sketch now given of this important battle it may be interesting to quote a few brief extracts from the diary of a British officer who was a guest of General Lee during the campaign in Pennsylvania, and which was published in *Blackwood's Magazine* in September last. The writer was an eye-witness of the battle of Gettysburg, and the hearty praise he lavishes upon the confederate troops and their generals, shows that all his sympathies were with the South, and he takes no pains to conceal his prejudices against the North. Speaking of the moment when the columns of Longstreet had been finally repulsed by our left on Friday afternoon, July 3, he says * * * "It is difficult to exaggerate the critical state of affairs as they appeared about this time. If the enemy or his general had shown any enterprise, there is no saying what might have happened. General Longstreet talked to me," he narrates, "for a long time about the battle. The General said the mistake Lee had made was in not concentrating the army more and making the attack with 30,000 men—12- instead of 10,000. It is impossible to avoid seeing," adds the English officer, "that the cause of this check to the confederates lies in their utter contempt for the enemy." He continues: "Wagons, horses, mules and cattle captured in Pennsylvania—the solid advantages of this campaign—have been passing slowly along the road (Fairfield) all day (July 4). So interminable was this train that it soon became evident that we should not be able to start. As soon as it became dark we all lay around a big fire. And I heard reports coming in from the different generals that the enemy was retiring, and had been doing so all day long. But this, of course, could make no difference to General Lee's plans. Ammunition he must have, as he had failed to capture it from the enemy according to precedent. Our progress," he continues, "was naturally very slow indeed. And we took eight hours to go so many miles."

I will close these extracts with the following graphic sketch of a "stampede" which occurred on Monday, July 6, about seven P. M., but which demonstrates most unequivocally the utter demoralization of the Confederate army:

"About seven P. M.," the writer states, "we rode through Hagerstown, in the streets of which were several dead horses and a few dead men. After proceeding about a mile beyond the town we halted, and General Longstreet sent four cavalymen up a lane, with directions to report everything they saw. We then dismounted and lay down. About ten minutes later (being nearly dark) we heard a sudden rush—a panic—and then a regular stampede ensued, in the midst of which I descried our four cavalry heroes crossing a field as fast as they could gallop. All was now complete confusion—officers mounting their horses and pursuing those which had got loose, and soldiers climbing over fences for protection against the supposed advancing Yankees. In the midst

of the din I heard an artillery officer saying to his cannoniers to stand by him and plant the guns in a proper position for enfilading the lane. I also distinguished Longstreet walking about, bustled by the excited crowd, and remarking, in angry tones, which could scarcely be heard, and to which no attention was paid, 'Now, you don't know what it is—you don't know what it is.' While the row and confusion were at its height the object of all this alarm at length emerged from the dark lane, in the shape of a domestic four-wheeled carriage, with a harmless lot of females. The stampede had, however, spread, increased in the rear, and caused much harm and delay."

It is to be hoped that the above narrative will be regarded as dispassionate, as it is meant to be impartial. Some slight errors may have crept in, but this may possibly stimulate others to come forward with a rectification. Had General Meade been more copious in his report and less reserved as to his own important acts, the necessity for this communication would not have existed.

HISTORICUS.

APPENDIX K

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, A REPLY BY "A STAFF OFFICER OF THE FIFTH CORPS" TO A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE SIGNED "HISTORICUS," MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 22, 1864. SEE PAGE 182, VOL. II

(For article signed "Historicus," see Appendix J)

(*New York Herald*, March 18, 1864)

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG—THE TRUTH OF HISTORY, &c.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Herald*:

In your paper of the 12th instant "Historicus" favors the world with an immense letter on the battle of Gettysburg. It is so manifestly intended to create public opinion that few will attach to it the importance the writer hopes. I wish to correct some of his misstatements, and, having been an eye-witness, claim to be both heard and believed.

FIRST—The Fifth corps was never placed under the orders of General Sickles at any time during the battle of Gettysburg and never was posted by General Sickles on the left of the Third corps.

SECOND—General Sykes was never requested to relieve Ward's brigade and Smith's battery on Roundtop for the very good reason that neither that brigade nor that battery was on Roundtop; and what is undeniable, was held by Vincent's brigade, First division, Fifth Corps; Weed's brigade, Second division, Fifth corps, and Hazlett's battery of regular artillery. Each of these commanders lost his life in its defence.

THIRD—Two brigades of Barnes's division (First), Fifth corps, were posted on the edge of a wood, and in front of a portion of the Third corps (Ward's brigade) before any musketry firing began; so that the hour's conflict sustained by the Third corps before the Fifth Corps came up has no existence.

FOURTH—General Crawford's troops, Fifth corps, were thrown into action by order of the corps commander, not by any order of General Sickles, or by any solicitation of Captain Moore, of General Sickles's staff.

FIFTH—The left of the Third corps was far in advance of Roundtop, and did not connect with it in any way.

SIXTH—The imminent danger of losing Roundtop resulted, not from the failure to relieve Ward's brigade, which was not there, but from an order of General Sickles, taking Weed's brigade from that hill to assist the Third corps, and Weed, in obeying this order, was met by his corps commander, and promptly returned to his position on the hill, just in time to assist in repelling Longstreet's attack.

SEVENTH—When a dispassionate writer seats himself to bolster up one officer at the expense of others, neither "hearsay evidence" nor "slight errors" should have a place in his narrative. Unadulterated truth should stamp its every assertion.

A STAFF OFFICER OF THE FIFTH CORPS.

APPENDIX L

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, A REPLY BY GENERAL BARNES TO A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE SIGNED "HISTORICUS," MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 22, 1864. SEE PAGE 182, VOL. II

(For article signed "Historicus," see Appendix J)

(New York *Herald*, March 21, 1864)

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Herald*:

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1864.

In the New York *Herald* of the 12th inst., a communication over the signature of "Historicus" purports to give the account of an "Eye-Witness" of the battle of Gettysburg, and the reason for it assigned that up to this time no clear narrative of it has appeared.

I desire to call attention to that portion of it which pretends to relate certain events in connection with the part taken by the Fifth Corps in that engagement, and particularly to what the writer refers to as an "alarming incident" occurring in the First division of that corps, which I had the honor to command. He says:—

"An alarming incident, however, occurred. Barnes' division of the Fifth Corps suddenly gave way, and Sickles, seeing this, put a battery

in position to check the enemy if he broke through this gap on our front, and General Birney was sent to order Barnes back into line. 'No,' he said, 'impossible. It is too hot, my men cannot stand it.' Remonstrance was unavailing, and Sickles despatched his aides to bring up any troops they met to fill this blank. Major Tremaine, of his staff, fell in with General Zook at the head of his brigade (Second corps), and this gallant officer instantly volunteered to take Barnes' place. When they reached the ground Barnes' disordered troops impeded the advance of the brigade. 'If you can't get out of the way,' cried Zook, 'lie down and I will march over you.' Barnes ordered his men to lie down, and the chivalrous Zook and his splendid brigade, under the personal direction of General Birney, did march over them and right into the breach. Alas! poor Zook soon fell mortally wounded, and half his brigade perished with him."

All this is pure invention. No such occurrence as is here related took place. There is not a particle of truth in it. No order was given to me by General Birney. None was received by me through any one from General Sickles. I did not see or hear from General Zook. I did not meet him in any way. I did not know he was there, and the article above referred to is the first intimation that I have had that any one pretended that any such event took place. There was no order to advance—no refusal; no orders to lie down given to the command by me or by any one else to my knowledge; no passing over my command (I should be sorry to see any body of men attempt to do such a thing in my division); nothing of the kind occurred that ever came to my knowledge, and I think I should have heard of such a thing before this late day if it, or anything like it, had taken place; the whole story is untrue in every particular, and my astonishment at now hearing of such a thing for the first time may possibly be imagined.

So much for that portion of the article above quoted.

In reference to other criticisms of the movements of the Fifth corps, it may perhaps properly devolve on others to refer to them. I shall only add a few words as to what the First division of that corps did do.

Upon receiving the orders to move to the front, the First division, composed of three brigades, was promptly in motion. In about fifteen minutes it reached the ground which it was ordered to occupy, to the left of the Third corps. General Sykes, commanding the Fifth corps, and myself, reached the ground in advance of the head of the column, and the position to be occupied by my division was determined upon.

As soon as the head of the column came up General Warren rode up in haste and earnestly requested General Sykes to permit a brigade to be sent to Round Top—a high elevation upon the left, not far from us—and urged the importance of holding that position.

Although separating one of my brigades from the remaining two, one of which was already weakened by the detachment of a Regiment—the Ninth Massachusetts—as skirmishers in another part of the field, yet, yielding to the emergency which was apparent, General Sykes con-

sented, and I immediately directed the Third brigade, then under the command of the late much lamented General Strong Vincent (who fell mortally wounded within an hour of receiving the order) to proceed in that direction. The Second brigade arrived next under the command of Colonel Sweitzer, who immediately placed his brigade in position. The 1st brigade, under the command of Colonel Tilton, was posted on the right of Colonel Sweitzer, being the right of the division and on the right of the position of the Fifth corps, the other two divisions of the corps extending to and embracing the celebrated Round Top.

The five corps therefore occupied what may well be called the post of honor of that day, and, as the result proved, well deserved that proud distinction.

In passing to their positions it was necessary for the two brigades of my division to cross an open piece of ground in a thick wood, at the entrance of which a portion of the three corps, commanded by General Birney, was lying upon the ground. My brigades, advancing over and beyond these men a considerable distance, took the position assigned them upon the opposite edge of the wood, nearest to the enemy. They were all in place before the engagement commenced in their front. An open and gently ascending ground upon the right seemed to be unguarded. To the right of this open space the remaining portion of the Third corps was posted. General Sykes observing this, remarked that that portion of the three corps now lying down in our rear would be soon relieved. The engagement commenced immediately and with great severity. The gap upon my right was still unoccupied. The First brigade was violently assailed in front and stood its ground without flinching, and soon after the fight became general along the whole of my front. Soon, however, the enemy, working his way through the gap upon my right, came down in large force upon my flank and rear.

Under these circumstances I was obliged to change my front to the right; the order was given, promptly executed in good order, and the further progress of the enemy in that direction was prevented.

Colonel Tilton in his official report says:—"In this last movement I was greatly embarrassed by squads of men and parts of regiments, who, hurrying from the front, broke into and through my lines. I retired, firing a short distance in the timber and took up a new position upon the right of the two divisions. All my officers and men did their duty, their whole duty, and showed the greatest coolness and courage."

Colonel Sweitzer in his official report says:—"The enemy were getting into our rear in the woods behind us on the right. I directed these regiments to change front, to face in that direction and meet them, which they did. I do not intend to go into the further details of these movements, or ascribe any blame to others or to fix any responsibility upon any one for any error which led to so threatening a danger to the flank and rear of my division. I only design to show that the orderly movement of my command, rendered imperative by the circumstances in which it was placed, prevented any further advance of the enemy upon my flank, notwithstanding the imminent danger to which it was exposed

by the unfortunate gap upon my right between portions of the Third corps."

It may have been simply anxiety, it may have been some other affection of the mind in the midst of the danger so apparent which prevented this "eye-witness," if he were one, upon whose narrative I am commenting from distinguishing between an orderly and a disorderly movement.

It is not absolutely necessary to attribute it to a desire to misrepresent. The motives and the object of the narrative must be judged by its general tenor. He has presented to the public what he claims to be a true and only correct account of the celebrated battle of Gettysburg.

So far as I am able to judge, and I saw something of the movements of that day, I think it filled with errors, detracting from the merits of some and exalting the moderate claims of others to a ridiculous excess.

JAMES BARNES,

Brigadier General United States Vols. Commanding Second Division, Fifth Corps, at the Battle of Gettysburg.

APPENDIX M

LETTER FROM GENERAL MEADE TO THE DEPARTMENT ENCLOSING NEWSPAPER ARTICLE SIGNED "HISTORICUS," MENTIONED IN LETTER OF APRIL 2, 1864. SEE PAGE 186, VOL. II

(For article signed "Historicus," see Appendix J)

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 15, 1864.*

COL. E. D. TOWNSEND,

A. A. G. Washington, D. C.

Colonel.

I enclose herewith a slip from the New York *Herald* of the 12th inst., containing a communication signed "Historicus," purporting to give an account of the battle of Gettysburg to which I desire to call the attention of the War Department—and ask such action thereon as may be deemed proper and suitable.

For the past fortnight the public press of the whole country has been teeming with articles, all having for their object assaults upon my reputation as an officer, and tending to throw discredit upon my operations at Gettysburg and my official report of the same. I have not noticed any of these attacks and should not now take action, but that the character of the communication enclosed bears such manifest proofs that it was written either by some one present at the battle, or dictated by some one present and having access not only to official documents, but to confidential papers that were never issued to the Army, much less made public.

I cannot resist the belief that this letter was either written or dictated by Major General D. E. Sickles. An issue has been raised between that officer and myself, in regard to the judgment displayed by him in the

position he took with his corps at Gettysburg. In my official report I deemed it proper to state that this position was a false and untenable one, but I did General Sickles the justice to express the opinion that altho' he had committed an error of judgment, it was done through a misapprehension of his orders and not from any intention to act contrary to my wishes. The prominence given to General Sickles' operations in the enclosed communication, the labored argument to prove his good judgment and my failings, all lead me to the conclusion he is either indirectly or directly the author.

As the communication contains so many statements prejudicial to my reputation, I feel called upon to ask the interposition of the Department, as I desire to consider the questions raised purely official. I therefore have to ask, that the Department will take steps to ascertain whether Major General Sickles has authorized or endorses this communication, and in the event of his replying in the affirmative I have to request of the President of the U. S. a court of inquiry that the whole subject may be thoroughly investigated and the truth made known. Should this court not be deemed advisable, any other action the Department may deem proper I desire should be taken, and should the Department decline any action, then I desire authority to make use of and publish such official documents, as, in my judgment, are necessary for my defense.

I am, Very respectfully

Your obt. servant

GEO. G. MEADE

Major General Comm'dg.

APPENDIX N

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT LINCOLN TO GENERAL MEADE IN
REPLY TO GENERAL MEADE'S LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT,
MENTIONED IN LETTER OF APRIL 2, 1864. SEE PAGE 186, VOL.
II

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, *March 29, 1864.*

MAJOR GENERAL MEADE.

My dear Sir :

Your letter to Col. Townsend, inclosing a slip from the *Herald*, and asking a Court of Inquiry, has been laid before me by the Secretary of War, with the request that I would consider it. It is quite natural that you should feel some sensibility on the subject; yet I am not impressed, nor do I think the country is impressed, with the belief that your honor demands, or the public interest demands, such an Inquiry. The country knows that, at all events, you have done good services; and I believe it agrees with me that it is much better for you to be engaged in trying to do more, than to be diverted, as you necessarily would be, by a Court of Inquiry.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

APPENDIX O

SECOND NEWSPAPER ARTICLE SIGNED "HISTORICUS," ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF APRIL 8, 1864. SEE PAGE 188, VOL. II

(For first article signed "Historicus," see Appendix J. For article by General Barnes, see Appendix L. For article by "A Staff Officer of the Fifth Corps," see Appendix K)

(New York *Herald*, April 4, 1864)

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

HISTORICUS

IN REPLY TO GENERAL BARNES AND THE STAFF OFFICERS OF THE SECOND AND FIFTH CORPS. THE EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR, &C.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Herald*.

In your journal of the 12th ult. I gave an impartial and conscientious sketch of the battle of Gettysburg. Regarding it as the decisive battle of the war, I thought it wise to put its main features on record while the facts were familiar and the principal actors at hand.

I challenged criticism; and three replies have appeared, accusing me, not only of inaccuracy, but downright misstatement. This induced me to redouble my researches, as my only motive was to aid the future historian of this great event.

To my satisfaction more than to my surprise, I find that not only was the outline of my picture correct but nearly every detail and incident exact. I stated, it may be remembered, that the left wing of our army, under the command of General Sickles was selected by General Lee as his report shows for the main point of his attack. I stated, also, that whilst this formidable attack was preparing all the morning of Thursday, July 2, General Sickles was left without orders, in spite of his urgent entreaties to the Commander-in-Chief, General Meade. I stated, likewise, that during this fearful interval, instead of being occupied with the steady advance of the enemy, General Meade was entirely engrossed with the plans for a retreat that General Butterfield, his Chief of Staff, was employed in drawing up, and that just at the moment the general order for retreat was prepared, the cannon of Longstreet opened on our left wing, under Sickles. I stated, further, that, as retreat was now hopeless, General Meade galloped up to our left flank and inspected the dispositions General Sickles had made on his own responsibility to repel the enemy, when the following colloquy ensued, which I repeat in epitome:—"Are your lines not too extended, General Sickles?" said the Commander-in-Chief. "Can you hold this front?" "Yes," replied Sickles, "till more troops are sent up." "I will send you the Fifth corps and a division of the Second corps and you can have all the

artillery you need." I stated finally, that the Third corps, constituting our left wing at the beginning of the battle, withstood "heroically," to use General Meade's expression, the furious onset of Longstreet for nearly an hour before the reinforcements promised to Sickles, by the Commander-in-Chief arrived and took their part in the dreadful fray. Now, I appeal to your readers when I ask what one of these statements, describing the beginning of the action, or any other portraying the contest of Friday, July 3, as well as the inglorious failure of General Meade to profit by his victory in pursuing and destroying the enemy, has been disproved or controverted by the anonymous communications published in reply? Not one. Allow me briefly to notice them.

The first evidently emanates from a champion of the Second corps, whose task was gratuitous; for it was far from my intention to disparage by a single word, the valiant troops of the Second corps or their gallant commander. The writer in question is deeply offended that General Sickles figured so conspicuously in the fight of July 2; but that is no fault of mine. The blame, if any, is to be attributed to the eagerness and activity of General Sickles. The said writer, however, makes one charge so grave that it demands refutation. He declares that Sickles advanced his corps so far away from his supports, on his right and left, as to cost the lives of these three thousand men to extricate him. He calls this a "sad error and an unaccountable one." Yes, it would have been an error for which General Sickles would have been immediately cashiered if he had committed it, the aspersion is preposterous. What General Sickles did do was to make a simple manœuvre which the movements of the enemy required. He changed his front to the left by wheeling forward the centre and right wing of his corps so as to confront the flank attack of Longstreet. No military critic would call this an advance. If he had not done this he would have been cut to pieces by an enfilading fire, and the safety of the army might have been compromised. Furthermore, it would have been difficult for General Sickles, at the moment in question, to abandon the support on his left for the obvious reason that he had none; for the Fifth corps, which afterwards took up position on his left, was not there when he changed front. So much for "Another Eye-Witness."

The second reply which appeared in your columns is signed by a "Staff Officer of the Fifth Corps" and he indulges in a series of such reckless assertions as to show that neither his temper any more than his memory, if he was at the battle, qualified him for the task of rectification. He first denies that General Sykes reported to General Sickles on the field. Then General Sykes failed in his duty; for he was ordered by General Meade to do so. Let me vindicate Sykes, however; for he did report, and Sickles requested him to take position on his left, and also to relieve General Ward's brigade and Smith's Battery on the Little Roundtop Mountain. Again, the "Staff Officer" asserts that the Third corps never had a soldier on the Roundtop. This is true enough for Ward's Brigade and Smith's Battery (Third corps was posted on the Little Roundtop, adjoining the Big Roundtop Mountain). This is a

mere quibble and unworthy of the gravity of the subject. I reassert that it was nearly an hour after the battle began before the Fifth corps reached the Big Roundtop; and it required all this time to march the distance. The desperate valor of the troops of this corps in defence of their position not only covers them with honor but sheds glory on the army and country. Three accomplished officers—Vincent, Weed and Hazlett, of the Fifth corps—consecrated the spot by their heroic deaths. With a view to mislead the public the "Staff Officer" coolly asserts that Barnes' division of the Fifth corps, was posted in front of a portion of Sickles' corps, but, forgetting this, he soon afterward states that "the left of Third corps (Sickles') was far in advance of the Roundtop," occupied by the Fifth corps. This is a ludicrous contradiction I will not dwell on; nor is it necessary to waste time on the blunders of the "Staff Officer."

A third letter and a long one, has appeared in your columns signed "James Barnes, Brigadier General, United States Volunteers commanding 1st division, Fifth corps, at the battle of Gettysburg," which denies in obstreperous language the unpleasant charge I felt myself obliged to make in my first letter. I narrated that Barnes' Division suddenly fell back and left a gap in the line of battle, and that General Birney by desire of General Sickles remonstrated at his conduct, but that Barnes refused to return to his position. I further declared that Zook's Brigade, which came up gallantly to supply the defection of Barnes, marched over his troops, who were ordered to lie down for this purpose. As General Barnes denies all this roundly, under his own signature, it is proper I should give the names of those who cheerfully came forward to corroborate in every point the facts I stated. I refer General Barnes, first to the letter of General de Trobriand, in the *Herald* of March 29, where he states that a portion of Barnes' division fell back and took position in his rear, and that in spite of his remonstrance they finally withdrew altogether without being engaged. This confirms what I alleged; but I have positive testimony in a private letter from General Birney, which he will not object I am sure, to my using. When he saw Barnes withdrawing his troops before they had received a shot, he remonstrated at Barnes' leaving a dangerous gap in his line, as well as abandoning the good position. It was of no avail, for Barnes retired. I copied the following from General Birney's letter:—

"He (Barnes) moved to the rear from three to four hundred yards, and formed in the rear of the road which passed from the Emmettsburg Road to the Round Top. When Zook's Brigade, the first one brought to me, came up, Barnes' troops (being in the way) were, at my request, ordered to lie down, and the Brigade from the Second corps passed over their prostrate bodies into the fight, under my command, relieving de Trobriand's left. A portion of the troops of Barnes were afterwards detached and fought splendidly under another commander. I mentioned the conduct of General Barnes to his corps commander General Sykes, and also to General Sedgwick, that night, after the Council; and Sykes told me that Colonel Sweitzer who commanded one of Barnes' Brigades, had reported the same thing."

This extract must be regarded as conclusive. In final confirmation, I may add that General Barnes was relieved of his command after the battle and now has been reduced from the commander of a division to a brigade. I regret to place General Barnes in so mortifying a position, but it is well that both officers and soldiers should know that the eye of the country follows them to the battlefield, and that while it sparkles with joy at their heroism it is dimmed with sorrow at the want of it. In fine, I defy my three assailants to deny that the invincible resistance of the Third corps under Sickles, to the determined flank attack of Longstreet, until the reinforcements arrived, saved the army from imminent danger; and no better proof of this is wanted than that it finally took the united efforts of the Third, Fifth and four brigades of the Second corps to defeat this grand manoeuvre of the enemy, and the result was still doubtful until the reserve (the Sixth corps) under General Sedgwick, came up.

It is only due to myself to say that my narrative of the battle of Gettysburg, published on the 12th ult. will be fully sustained by the concurrent testimony of all the generals who have recently appeared before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. The evidence of General Butterfield, Chief of Staff to General Meade, is known to be so ruinous to the reputation of the Commander of the Army of the Potomac that it will be a singular indifference to public opinion on the part of the government if he is allowed to remain longer in that important post. It has been most conclusively proved that nothing was easier than to force Lee's whole army to an unconditional surrender at Williamsport, where he was without ammunition or subsistence, and the swollen Potomac preventing his escape. It was stated that our army was so humiliated at the vacillation and timidity of General Meade on this occasion that many of them shed tears and talked of throwing down their arms. Yet General Meade still commands this noble army, and not only that, but he has lately ventured to break up, under shallow pretexts two of its finest corps, and dismiss some of its most heroic officers, Pleasanton, Sykes and others. It will be an important inquiry for the Committee on the Conduct of the War to ascertain by whose influence General Meade exercises such arbitrary power. This vital and dangerous act was carried out without any consultation with General Grant and may we not hope, that for his own sake and the country's sake he will wield the authority which belongs to him, else the worst is to be feared.

HISTORICUS.

APPENDIX P

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN
LETTER OF JUNE 9, 1864. SEE PAGE 202, VOL. II*(Philadelphia Inquirer, June 2, 1864)*

MEADE'S POSITION

He is as much the commander of the Army of the Potomac as he ever was. GRANT plans and exercises a supervisory control over the army, but to MEADE belongs everything of detail. He is entitled to great credit for the magnificent movements of the army since we left Brandy, for they have been dictated by him. In battle he puts troops in action and controls their movements; in a word, he commands the army. General GRANT is here only because he deems the present campaign the vital one of the war, and wishes to decide on the spot all questions that would be referred to him as General-in-Chief.

History will record, but newspapers cannot, that on one eventful night during the present campaign GRANT's presence saved the army, and the nation too; not that General MEADE was on the point to commit a blunder unwittingly, but his devotion to his country made him loth to risk her last army on what he deemed a chance. GRANT assumed the responsibility and we are still

ON TO RICHMOND

APPENDIX Q

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED
IN LETTER OF OCTOBER 23, 1864. SEE PAGE 236, VOL. II*(New York Independent, October 13, 1864)*

THE WAR IN VIRGINIA

The military news of the week covers a wide field. Dispatches of considerable interest have been received from the James River, from the Shenandoah Valley, from Georgia, from Kentucky, and from Missouri. The operations in all quarters are important, but the public attention, as usual, is concentrated upon Virginia, and the movements near Richmond have again attracted that regard which the brilliancy of Sheridan's victories for the moment diverted to the Shenandoah.

We are obliged to reverse the opinion of last week as to the operations of the Army of the Potomac under Gen. Meade, southwest of Petersburg. The twofold movement which Gen. Grant planned, and which

ought to have been even a more complete success than we had reckoned it, now turns out to have failed from lack of generalship on the left wing. North of the James, Gen. Butler carried out his part of the programme promptly and thoroughly. South of it "somebody blundered"—Gen. Meade, to wit; and the Army of the Potomac, which he is still permitted to command, instead of carrying the Southside railroad, as was expected, gave up its great opportunity to the clumsiness of its leader. The old, old blunder was once more repeated. The Executive Officer of that army could not control its maneuvers. The Ninth Corps, proverbially tardy, was far behind when the Fifth, under Warren, had reached its appointed ground, and between the two occurred that fatal gap, into which the enemy again struck with all his force, rolled up an exposed division, captured a brigade or two, and then hurried off with his prizes. The advance was arrested, the whole movement interrupted, the safety of an army imperiled, the plans of the campaign frustrated—and all because one general, whose incompetence, indecision, half-heartedness in the war have again and again been demonstrated, is still unaccountably to hamper and hamstring the purposes of the lieutenant-general. Let us chasten our impatient hope of victory so long as Gen. Meade retains his hold on the gallant Army of the Potomac; but let us tell the truth of him.

He is the general who at Gettysburg bore off the laurels which belonged to Howard and to Hancock; who at Williamsport suffered a beaten army to escape him; who, when holding the line of the Rapidan, fled before Lee without a battle to the gates of the capital; who at Mine Run drew back in dismay from a conflict which he had invited and which his army longed to convert into triumph; who, in the campaign from the Rapidan to the James under Grant, annulled the genius of his chief by his own executive incapacity; who lost the prize of Petersburg by martinet delay on the south bank of the James; who lost it again in succeeding contests by tactical incompetence; who lost it again by inconceivable follies of military administration when the mine was exploded; who insulted his corps commanders and his army by attributing to them that inability to co-operate with each other which was traceable solely to the unmilitary slovenliness of their general; who, in a word, holds his place by virtue of no personal qualification, but in deference to a presumed, fictitious, perverted, political necessity, and who hangs upon the neck of Gen. Grant like an Old Man of the Sea whom he longs to be rid of, and whom he retains solely in deference to the weak complaisance of his constitutional Commander-in-Chief. Be other voices muzzled, if they must be, ours, at least, shall speak out on this question of enforced military subservience to political, to partisan, to personal requisitions. We, at least, if no other, may declare in the name of a wronged, baffled, indignant army, that its nominal commander is unfit, or unwilling, or incapable to lead it to victory, and we ask that Grant's hands may be strengthened by the removal of Meade.

The dispatches of Gen. Butler, wholly confirmed by one from Gen. Grant, show that he has maintained the line heretofore gained on the north of the James. Lee assaulted in force on Friday last, and carried a

picket defended only by cavalry, but was utterly repulsed and driven off with heavy loss in attempting to recover the position held by Butler's infantry. The loss on our side was one-eighth that of the enemy, and the gain to us was greater than can be numerically stated; for the assault proves two things. First, that the line Butler has occupied is a severe loss to the enemy; and, second, that, although Lee is forced to assume the offensive with his attenuated army in order to regain this line, he cannot carry the coveted position. Butler is within four miles of Richmond. We privately hear the rebel works which he now holds described as more formidable than any before taken from them; and they are held in an iron grasp!

The truth is, Grant presses with irresistible steadiness toward the rebel capital. Richmond is undergoing a relentless siege. Attacks from our side and sallies from theirs meet with varying fortune, but the advance, the pressure, the average of advantage is wholly with Gen. Grant, and he has never once relinquished a foot of ground gained, nor even for a moment halted in his movement for the final capture of Richmond. And to-day he is nearer than ever to his goal; to-morrow he will have taken still another step.

We must add one word, to say that Gen. Sheridan has won another fight in the Shenandoah. He fell back from Harrisonburg to Strasburg, and, as the enemy's cavalry under Rosser followed, Sheridan improved the opportunity to show that he had not forgotten his experience as a cavalry leader. He attacked Rosser, and drove him pell mell up the valley for 26 miles, with loss of 11 guns and 330 prisoners. "I thought I would delay one day to settle this new cavalry general," says Phil. Sheridan.

APPENDIX R

LETTERS FROM GENERAL GRANT TO MR. WILSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, AND MR. WASHBURNE, AT WASHINGTON, D. C., URGING GENERAL MEADE'S CONFIRMATION AS MAJOR-GENERAL IN THE REGULAR ARMY, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF JANUARY 21, 1865. SEE PAGE 257, VOL. II

Grant to Wilson:

CITY POINT, VA., Jan. 23, 1865.

I see that Generals Thomas and Sheridan have been confirmed as Major Generals in the Regular Army, whilst no mention is made of General Meade's confirmation to the same rank. From this I infer objections have been raised. This I regret.

General Meade was appointed at my solicitation after a campaign the most protracted, and covering more severely contested battles, than any of which we have any account in history.

I have been with General Meade during the whole campaign, and not only made the recommendation upon a conviction that this recognition

of his services was fully won, but that he was eminently qualified for the command such rank would entitle him to.

I know General Meade well. What the objections raised to his confirmation are, I do not know. Did I know, I would address myself directly to these objections.

Hoping that your Honorable Body will consider this case favorably, etc.

Grant to Washburne (in part):

CITY POINT, VA., Jan. 23, 1865.

I see some objections are raised to Meade's confirmation as Major-General in the regular army. What the objections are I do not know and cannot therefore address myself to them. General Meade is one of our truest men and ablest officers. He has been constantly with that army confronting the strongest, best appointed and most confident army in the South. He therefore has not had the same opportunity of winning laurels so distinctly marked as have fallen to the lot of other Generals. But I defy any man to name a commander who would do more than he has done with the same chances.

I am satisfied, with a full knowledge of the man, what he has done, and the circumstances attending all his military acts, all objections would be removed. I wrote a letter to Senator Wilson to day in his behalf, which I hope will have some weight. If you can put in a word with some of the Senators particularly those who oppose his confirmation and are willing to do it, I will feel much obliged.

APPENDIX S

DESPATCH FROM GENERAL GRANT TO GENERAL MEADE ON THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR
ABOUT THE PETERSBURG MINE EXPLOSION, MENTIONED
IN LETTER OF FEBRUARY 9, 1865. SEE PAGE 261, VOL. II

Grant to Meade:

Feb. 9, 10 A. M.

The Committee on the Conduct of the War have published the result of their investigation of the Mine explosion. Their opinions are not sustained by knowledge of the facts nor by my evidence nor yours either do I suppose. Gen. Burnside's evidence apparently has been their guide and to draw it mildly he has forgotten some of the facts. I think in justification to yourself who seem to be the only party censured, Genl. Burnside should be brought before a Court Martial and let the proceedings of the Court go before the public along with the report of the Congressional Committee.

APPENDIX T

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, FINDINGS OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY IN
THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PETERSBURGH MINE EXPLOSION,
MENTIONED IN LETTER OF MARCH 13, 1865. SEE PAGE 267,
VOL. II

(*Army and Navy Journal*, of March 11, 1865)

THE PETERSBURGH EXPLOSION

DECISION OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF ITS FAILURE

The following is the finding and opinion of the court ordered to investigate the circumstances attending the failure of the explosion of the mine before Petersburg:—

FINDING

After mature deliberation of the testimony adduced, the court find the following facts and circumstances attending the unsuccessful assault on the 30th July:

The *mine*, quite an important feature in the attack, was commenced by Major General Burnside, soon after the occupation of his present lines, without any directions obtained from the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac. Although its location—and in this the engineers of the army concur—was not considered by Major General Meade a proper one, it being commanded from both flanks and reverse, the continuance of the work was sanctioned.

It was not the intention of the Lieutenant General Commanding, or of the Major General commanding the Army of the Potomac, it is believed, to use the mine in the operations against Petersburg, until it became known that the enemy had withdrawn a large part of his forces to the north side of the James River, when it was thought advantage might be taken of it as an assault. All the Union troops sent north of the James had been recalled in time to participate in the assault, so that the whole of the forces operating in front of Petersburg were disposable.

The mine was ordered to be exploded at 3.30 A. M., but owing to a defective fuse, it did not take place till 4.45.

The detailed order or plan of operations issued by Major General Meade is in accordance with General Grant's instructions, and was seen and approved by the latter previous to its publication. (It is marked K in the appendix of the report of the Court of Inquiry.)

It is the concurrent testimony that had the order been carried out, success would have attended the attack. Also it is in evidence that General Meade met General Burnside and three of his division commanders the day before the assault, and impressed upon them that the operation was to be one of *time*; that unless prompt advantage were taken of the explosion of the mine to gain the crest, it would be impossible to get it, or the troops to remain outside of their lines.

That order directed that General Burnside should "form his troops (the Ninth corps) for assaulting," and that General Ord commanding the Eighteenth corps, and General Warren commanding the Fifth corps, should support the assault on the right and left respectively.

Major General Burnside's order (No. 60 Appendix) directed Brigadier General Ledlie's division, immediately on the explosion of the mine, to be moved forward and crown the crest known as Cemetery Hill. Brigadier General Wilcox was to move his division forward as soon as possible after General Ledlie's bearing off to the left, and Brigadier General Potter was to move his (colored) division next, and pass over the same ground that General Ledlie did.

Five minutes after the explosion of the mine, General Ledlie's division went forward, and it was followed by those of Generals Wilcox and Potter, though it is in evidence that the latter did not move in the prescribed order, and that they were not formed in a manner to do the duty assigned them.

General Ledlie's division, instead of complying with the order, halted in the crater made by the explosion of the mine, and remained there about an hour, when Major General Meade received the first intimation of the fact through a dispatch from Lieutenant Colonel Loring, Assistant Inspector General of the Ninth corps, intended for General Burnside, in which he expressed the fear that the men could not be induced to advance.

The crater was on the enemy's line of works, and was fifty to sixty yards long, twenty yards wide and twenty to twenty five feet deep. It was about five hundred yards from the cemetery crest.

General Burnside was then (5.40 A. M.) ordered to push forward to the crest all his own troops, and to call on General Ord to move forward his troops at once. It is in evidence that when the order was communicated to General Ferrero, commanding the colored division, he said he could not put in his troops until the troops already in front should be moved out of the way. They did go forward, however, after some delay, but only to be driven back, and in their flight to rush impetuously against other troops, destroying their formation and producing disorder.

At 6.10 A. M., inquiry being made of General Burnside if it would be an advantage for Warren's supporting force to go in at once on the left, the answer was, "there is scarcely room for it in our immediate front." The importance of the utmost promptness and the securing of the crest at once, at all hazards, were urged upon him at 6.50 A. M.

At 7.20 A. M. General Burnside reported to General Meade that he was doing all in his power to push forward the troops and, if possible, carry the crest, and also that the main body of General Potter's division was beyond the crater. It does not appear in evidence, however, that they ever got any considerable distance, not exceeding two hundred yards, beyond the crater, toward the crest, whence they were driven back immediately. This was also the fate of the few colored troops who got over the enemy's line for a moment.

At 9 o'clock A. M., General Burnside reported many of the Ninth and

Eighteenth corps were retiring before the enemy, and then was the time to put in the Fifth corps. It having just been reported, however, by two staff officers (not General Burnside's) that the attack on the right of the mine had been repulsed, and that none of the Union troops were beyond the line of the crater, the commanding General thought differently; and the Lieutenant-General concurring, General Burnside was directed, at 9.10 A. M., to withdraw to his own entrenchments immediately or at a later period, but not to hold the enemy's line any longer than was required to withdraw safely his men. This order brought General Burnside to General Meade's headquarters, where he remonstrated against it, saying by nightfall he could carry the crest. No other officer who was present, and who has testified before the court, concurred in this opinion. The troops in the crater were then ordered to retire; but before it could be effected they were driven out with great loss at 2 p. m. These troops, however, were making preparations to retire, and but for that would probably not have been driven out at that time.

The Fifth corps did not participate at all in the assault, and General Ord's command only partially, because the condition of affairs at no time admitted of their co-operation, as was contemplated by the plan of assault.

The causes of failure are:

1. The injudicious formation of the troops in going forward, the movement being mainly by flank instead of extended front. General Meade's order indicated that columns of assault should be employed to take Cemetery Hill, and that proper passages should be prepared for those columns. It is the opinion of the court that there were no proper columns of assault. The troops should have been formed in the open ground in front of the point of attack, parallel to the line of the enemy's works. The evidence shows that one or more columns might have passed over at and to the left of the crater without any previous preparation of the ground.

2. The halting of the troops in the crater instead of going forward to the crest, when there was no fire of any consequence from the enemy.

3. No proper employment of engineer officers and working parties, and of materials and tools for their use in the Ninth corps.

4. That some parts of the assaulting columns were not properly led.

5. That want of a competent common head at the scene of assault, to direct affairs as concurrence should demand.

Had not failure ensued from the above causes and the crest been gained, the success might have been jeopardized by the failure to have prepared in season proper and adequate debouches through the Ninth corps lines for troops, and especially for field artillery, as ordered by Major General Meade.

The reasons why the attack ought to have been successful are:

1. The evident surprise of the enemy at the time of the explosion of the mine, and for some time after.

2. The comparatively small force in the enemy's works.

3. The ineffective fire of the enemy's artillery and musketry, there

being scarcely any for about thirty minutes after the explosion, and our artillery being just the reverse as to time and power.

4. The fact that some of our troops were able to get two hundred yards beyond the crater toward the crest, but could not remain there or proceed farther for want of supports, or because they were not properly formed or led.

OPINION

The court having given a brief narrative of the assault, and "the facts and circumstances attending it," it remains to report, that the following named officers engaged therein, appear from the evidence to be "answerable for the want of success" which should have resulted:

I. Major General A. E. Burnside, United States Volunteers, he having failed to obey the orders of the commanding General.

1. In not giving such formation to his assaulting column as to insure a reasonable prospect of success.

2. In not preparing his parapets and abatis for the passage of the columns of the assault.

3. In not employing engineer officers who reported to him to lead the assaulting columns with working parties, and not causing to be provided proper materials necessary for covering the crest when the assaulting columns should arrive there.

4. In neglecting to execute Major General Meade's orders respecting the prompt advance of General Ledlie's troops from the crater to the crest, or in default of accomplishing that, not causing those troops to fall back and give place to other troops more willing and equal to the task, instead of delaying until the opportunity passed away, thus affording the enemy time to recover from his surprise, concentrate his fire, and bring his troops to operate against the Union troops assembled uselessly in the crater.

Notwithstanding the failure to comply with orders, and to apply proper military principles, ascribed to General Burnside, the court is satisfied that he believed the measures taken by him would insure success.

II. Brigadier General J. H. Ledlie, United States Volunteers, he having failed to push forward his division promptly according to orders, and thereby blocking up the avenue which was designed for the passage of troops ordered to follow and support him in the assault. It is in evidence that no commander reported to General Burnside that his troops could not be got forward, which the court regards as a neglect of duty on the part of General Ledlie, inasmuch as a timely report of the misbehavior might have enabled General Burnside, commanding the assault, to have made other arrangements for prosecuting it, before it became too late. Instead of being with his division during this difficulty in the crater, and by his personal efforts endeavoring to lead his troops forward, he was most of his time in a bomb-proof ten rods in rear of the main line of the Ninth corps, where it was impossible for him to see anything of the movements of troops that were going on.

III. Brigadier General Edward Ferrero, United States Volunteers—

1. For not having all his troops found ready for the attack at the prescribed time.

2. Not going forward with them to the attack.

3. Being in a bomb-proof habitually, where he could not see the operations of his troops, showing by his own order issued while there, that he did not know the position of two brigades of his division, or whether they had taken Cemetery Hill or not.

IV. Colonel Z. R. Bliss, Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers, commanding first brigade, Second division, Ninth corps:—

In this, that he remained behind with the only regiment of his brigade which did not go forward according to orders, and occupied a position where he could not properly command a brigade, which formed a portion of an assaulting column, and where he could not see what was going on.

V. Brigadier General O. B. Wilcox, United States Volunteers:—

The court are not satisfied that General Wilcox's division made efforts commensurate with the occasion, to carry out General Burnside's order to advance to Cemetery Hill, and they think that more energy might have been exercised by Brigadier General Wilcox to cause his troops to go forward to that point.

Without intending to convey the impression that there was any disinclination on the part of the commanders of the supports to heartily co-operate in the attack on the 30th day of July, the court express their opinion that explicit orders should have been given assigning one officer to the command of all the troops intended to engage in the assault when the commanding General was not present to witness the operations.

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,

Major General United States Volunteers, President of Court.

EDWARD SCHRIVER,

Inspector General U. S. A., Judge Advocate.

The court then adjourned sine die.

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,

Major General United States Volunteers, President of Court.

EDWARD SCHRIVER,

Inspector General, U. S. A., Judge Advocate.

APPENDIX U

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, IN FAVOR OF GENERAL MEADE, MENTIONED IN LETTER OF APRIL 18, 1865. SEE PAGE 273, VOL. II

(*New York Herald*, April 14, 1865)

GENERAL MEADE

The impression seems to have gotten out at the North that General Meade is not very popular with his army. This is a great mistake, and has been fully verified in the past two days. I never saw so much enthusiasm displayed for any man as was for him after the surrender of Lee's army.

Our troops were drawn up on either side of the road and when General Meade rode through they seemed nearly crazed with joy. Cheer followed cheer, and hats were thrown up in the air with apparent disregard of where they should land or what became of them.

General Meade was equally excited. He seemed for the time to throw off his reserve and dignity and enter fully into the spirit of the occasion.

APPENDIX V

GENERAL MEADE'S LETTER TO COL. G. G. BENEDICT OF MARCH 16, 1870, ON THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG. SEE LETTER OF APRIL 8, 1864, PAGE 188, VOL. II

GENERAL MEADE'S LETTER ON GETTYSBURG

THE LETTER OF GENERAL MEADE REGARDING THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG, WRITTEN SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE BATTLE, TO COLONEL G. G. BENEDICT, OF VERMONT, AND PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME BY COLONEL BENEDICT, IN THE *Weekly Press* OF PHILADELPHIA OF AUGUST 11, 1886, IN REFUTATION OF THE STATEMENTS MADE ON THE BATTLE-FIELD BY GENERAL DANIEL E. SICKLES, ON THE OCCASION OF THE REUNION, JULY 2, 1886, OF THE REMNANT OF THE THIRD CORPS OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, ON THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Weekly Press*, OF PHILADELPHIA.

Sir: A word of explanation of the circumstances which drew forth the following letter seems to be necessary.

In an oration delivered before the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers in November, 1869, the orator, Colonel W. W. Grout, of that State, who had made the acquaintance of General D. E. Sickles, and had adopted the latter's views upon certain points relating to the battle of Gettysburg, advanced the theory—more familiar now than it was then—that General Sickles's famous movement on the second day of the

battle was a fortunate step; that it kept General Meade from retreating to Pipe Creek, and that but for Sickles's movements the battle of Gettysburg might never have been fought, and the victory of Gettysburg never won.

In some editorial comments, published in the Burlington (Vt.) *Free Press*, on the oration, I took up the points thus made. I had had at that time no correspondence with General Meade, nor had I any personal acquaintance either with him or General Sickles, or any prejudice for or against either general. But having witnessed from the brow of Cemetery Hill on that bloody day the movement of General Sickles's corps and some of its consequences, and having made some subsequent study of the battle, I could not accept the orator's conclusions, though presented by a comrade and friend. I protested against this portion of the oration as a distortion of history and an undue exaltation of a corps commander at the expense of the commander of the army; and, by citation of undisputed facts, of orders on the order-books of the Army of the Potomac, and of General Meade's despatches to General Halleck, I showed that General Meade could not have been contemplating on the 2d of July a withdrawal of his army from Gettysburg, unless compelled to withdraw by a movement of the enemy upon his lines of communication; that, on the contrary, his determination to fight, defensively if he could, but offensively rather than not at all, at Gettysburg, was clearly demonstrated, and that the fame of General Sickles for conscious or unconscious achievements must rest on something else than the prevention of the retreat of the Army of the Potomac from Gettysburg.

The newspaper articles¹ containing this view of the subject were subsequently sent to General Meade, who, in acknowledging them, gave the clear, calm, and convincing presentation of his side of the controversy printed below. This has long been held in confidence, as it was written, but, in view of the recent elaborate attack upon General Meade's military reputation, made by General Sickles in his address at Gettysburg, the interests of truth and justice seem to demand that it be given to the public.

Yours truly,

G. G. BENEDICT.

BURLINGTON, VT., *August 7, 1886.*

GENERAL MEADE'S LETTER

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE ATLANTIC
PHILADELPHIA, *March 16, 1870.*

(Private)

G. G. BENEDICT, Burlington, Vt.:

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., as also the copies of the *Free Press*, with editorials and comments on the address of Colonel Grout before the Officers' Society and Legislature of the State.

¹ The substance of these editorials in the Burlington *Free Press* will be found in the appendix to the second edition of Colonel Benedict's admirable little work, "Vermont at Gettysburg."—ED. WEEKLY PRESS.

I have carefully read your articles, and feel personally under great obligations to you for the clear and conclusive manner in which you have vindicated the truth of history. I find nothing to correct in your statement except a fact you mention, which is a misapprehension.

I did not invite General Humphreys to be my chief-of-staff till after the battle, because I did not see him after assuming command till I met him on the field, and besides I relied on him as a mainstay in handling the Third Corps, and did not wish to withdraw him from that position.¹ I did ask General Williams to assume the duties in addition to those of adjutant-general, but he declined. I also asked General Warren, then my chief of engineers, to act temporarily as chief-of-staff, but he also declined taking on himself additional duties. Under these circumstances I asked General Butterfield to remain till I had time to make permanent arrangements. On the third day, General Butterfield having been disabled by being struck with a fragment of a spent shell, left the army, and a few days afterwards General Humphreys accepted my invitation.

My defence against the charges and insinuations of Generals Sickles and Butterfield is to be found in my testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. I have avoided any controversy with either of these officers—though both have allowed no opportunity to pass unimproved which permitted them to circulate their *ex parte* statements, and, as you justly say, to distort history for their purposes. Both perfectly understand what I meant by my ante-battle order, referring to Pipe Clay Creek, also my instructions to Butterfield on the morning of the 2d, which he persists in calling an order for retreat, in the face of all my other acts, and of the fact that I did not retreat when I could have done so with perfect ease at any moment. Longstreet's advice to Lee² was sound military sense; it was the step I feared Lee would take, and to meet which, and be prepared for which was the object of my instructions to Butterfield, which he has so misrepresented. Now, let me tell you another historical fact. Lieutenant-General Ewell, in a conversation held with me shortly after the war, asked what would have been the effect if at 4 p. m. on the 1st he had occupied Culp's Hill and established batteries on it. I told him that in my judgment, in the then condition of the Eleventh and First Corps, with their morale affected by their withdrawal to Cemetery Ridge, with the loss of over half their numbers in killed, wounded, and missing (of the 6000 prisoners we lost in the field nearly all came from these corps in the first day), his occupation of Culp's Hill, with batteries commanding the whole of Cemetery Ridge, would have produced the evacuation of that ridge and the withdrawal

¹ General Meade's recollection on this point seems to be slightly at fault. He did see General Humphreys on the morning he assumed command of the Army of the Potomac, at Frederick City, and he at that time expressed his desire of appointing him his chief-of-staff, but after discussion it was agreed between them that this officer could be of greater service by retaining command of his division in the Third Corps during the impending battle.—(General Humphreys' testimony before Committee on Conduct of War.)

² To move from his right upon General Meade's communications.

of the troops there by the Baltimore Pike and Taneytown and Emmettsburg roads. He then informed me that at 4 P. M. on the 1st he had his corps, 20,000 strong, in column of attack, and on the point of moving on Culp's Hill, which he saw was unoccupied and commanded Cemetery Ridge, when he received an order from General Lee directing him to assume the defensive, and not to advance; that he sent to General Lee urging to be permitted to advance with his reserves, but the reply was a reiteration of the previous order. To my inquiry why Lee had restrained him, he said our troops coming up (Slocum's) were visible, and Lee was under the impression that the greater part of my army was on the ground and deemed it prudent to await the rest of his—as you quote from his report.

But suppose Ewell with 20,000 men had occupied Culp's Hill, and our brave soldiers had been compelled to evacuate Cemetery Ridge and withdraw on the roads above referred to, would the Pipe Clay Creek order have been so very much out of place?

That order was to meet the very contingency here in question, to wit: A part of my army, overwhelmed by superior numbers, compelled to fall back, and a line of battle formed to the rear of my most advanced position thus necessitated.

As to General Sickles having by his advance brought on the attack, and thus compelled the battle which decided the war, you have completely answered—and it is a very favorite theory with the partisans of this officer. But these gentlemen ignore the fact that of the 18,000 men killed and wounded on the field during the whole battle, more than two-thirds were lost on the second day, and but for the timely advance of the Fifth Corps, and the prompt sending a portion on Round Top, where they met the enemy almost on the crest and had a desperate fight to secure the position—I say, but for these circumstances, over which Sickles had neither knowledge nor control, the enemy would have secured Round Top, planted his artillery there, commanding the whole battlefield, and what the result would have been I leave you to judge. Now, when I wrote my report of the battle I honestly believed General Sickles did not know where I wished him to go, and that his error arose from a misapprehension of my orders, but I have recently learned from General Geary, who had the day before been sent by Hancock to hold the left, and who in doing so had seen the great importance of Round Top and posted a brigade on it, that on the morning of the 2d, when he received my order that he would be relieved by the Third Corps, and on being relieved, would rejoin his own corps (Twelfth) on the right, after waiting for some time to be relieved he sent to General Sickles a staff officer with instructions to explain the position and its importance, and to ask, if troops could not be sent to relieve him, that General Sickles would send one of his staff to see the ground, and to place troops there on their arrival. He received for reply that General Sickles would attend to it in due time. No officer or troops came, and after waiting till his patience was exhausted, General Geary withdrew and joined his corps. Now my first orders to General Sickles were to relieve the Twelfth Corps di-

vision (Geary's) and occupy their position. Here is evidence that he knew the position occupied by Geary's division, or could have known, and yet failed to occupy it. Furthermore, when he came to my headquarters at about noon, and said he did not know where to go, I answered, "Why, you were to relieve the Twelfth Corps." He said they had no position; they were massed, awaiting events. Then it was I told him his right was to be Hancock's left, his left on Round Top, which I pointed out. Now his right was three-quarters of a mile in front of Hancock's left, and his left one-quarter of a mile in front of the base of Round Top, leaving that key-point unoccupied, which ought to have been occupied by Longstreet before we could get there with the Fifth Corps. Sickles's movement practically destroyed his own corps, the Third, caused a loss of 50 per cent. in the Fifth Corps, and very heavily damaged the Second Corps; as I said before, producing 66 per cent. of the loss of the whole battle, and with what result—driving us back to the position he was ordered to hold originally. These losses of the first and second day affected greatly the efficiency and morale of the army, and prevented my having the audacity in the offense that I might otherwise have had.

If this is an advantage,—to be so crippled in battle without attaining an object,—I must confess I cannot see it.

Pardon my writing with so much prolixity, but your generous defence and the clear view you have taken of the battle have led me to wander thus far.

Very truly yours,

GEO. G. MEADE.

APPENDIX W

TESTIMONY OF GENERAL MEADE BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR RELATING TO THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG AND SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS. SEE PAGE 176, VOL. II

TESTIMONY OF MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE G. MEADE

WASHINGTON, *March 5, 1864.*

MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE G. MEADE *sworn and examined.*

By the Chairman:

Question: What is your rank and position in the service?

Answer: I am a major general of volunteers, commanding the army of the Potomac.

Question: When were you invested with the command of that army?

Answer: I think it was the 28th of June, 1863.

Question: Where was the army at that time?

Answer: It was lying around and near Frederick, Maryland.

Question: You superseded General Hooker?

Answer: I relieved General Hooker.

Question: Will you give a statement, in your own way, of the battle of Gettysburg, and the disposition of your troops there?

Answer: When I assumed the command of the army of the Potomac, on the morning of the 28th of June, it was mostly around Frederick, Maryland; some portions of it, I think, were at that time at Middletown; one or two corps were the other side of a range of mountains between Frederick and Middletown. I had no information concerning the enemy beyond the fact that a large force under General Lee, estimated at about 110,000 men, had passed through Hagerstown, and had marched up the Cumberland valley; and through information derived from the public journals I had reason to believe that one corps of the rebel army, under General Ewell, was occupying York and Carlisle, and threatening the Susquehanna at Harrisburg and Columbia.

My predecessor, General Hooker, left the camp in a very few hours after I relieved him. I received from him no intimation of any plan, or any views that he may have had up to that moment. And I am not aware that he had any, but was waiting for the exigencies of the occasion to govern him, just as I had to be subsequently.

Under this existing state of affairs I determined, and so notified the general-in-chief, that I should move my army as promptly as possible on the main line from Frederick to Harrisburg, extending my wings on both sides of that line as far as I could consistently with the safety and the rapid concentration of that army, and I should continue that movement until I either encountered the enemy, or had reason to believe that the enemy was about to advance upon me; my object being at all hazards to compel him to loose his hold on the Susquehanna and meet me in battle at some point. It was my firm determination, never for an instant deviated from, to give battle wherever and as soon as I could possibly find the enemy, modified, of course, by such general considerations as govern every general officer—that when I came into his immediate neighborhood some manœuvres might be made by me with a view to secure advantages on my side in that battle, and not allow them to be secured by him.

On the morning of the 29th of June the army was put in motion. On the night of the 30th, after the army had made two days' marches, I had become satisfied, from information which I had received from different sources, that the enemy was apprised of my movement; that he had relinquished his hold on the Susquehanna; that he was concentrating his forces, and that I might expect to come in contact with him in a very short time; when and where, I could not at that moment tell. Under those circumstances, I instructed my engineers with such information as we had in our possession, from maps and from such knowledge of the country as we could obtain from individuals, to look about and select some general ground, having a general reference to the existing position of the army, by which, in case the enemy should advance on me across the South mountain, I might be able, by rapid movement of concentration, to occupy this position, and be prepared to give him battle upon my own terms. With this view the general line of Pipe-creek, I

think, was selected; and a preliminary order, notifying the corps commanders that such line might possibly be adopted, and directing them, in the event of my finding it in my power to take such a position, how they might move their corps and what their positions should be along this line. This order was issued, I think, on the night of the 30th of June, possibly on the morning of the 1st of July, certainly before any positive information had reached me that the enemy had crossed the mountain and were in conflict with any portion of my force.

On the 1st of July, my headquarters being at Taneytown, and having directed the advance of two corps the previous day to Gettysburg, with the intention of occupying that place, about 1 or 2 o'clock in the day, I should think, I received information that the advance of my army, under Major General Reynolds, of the 1st corps, on their reaching Gettysburg, had encountered the enemy in force, and that the 1st and 11th corps were at that time engaged in a contest with such portions of the enemy as were there. The moment I received this information I directed Major General Hancock, who was with me at the time, to proceed without delay to the scene of the contest; and, having in view this preliminary order which I had issued to him, as well as to other corps commanders, I directed him to make an examination of the ground in the neighborhood of Gettysburg and to report to me, without loss of time, the facilities and advantages or disadvantages of that ground for receiving battle. I furthermore instructed him that in case, upon his arrival at Gettysburg—a place which I had never seen in my life, and had no more knowledge of than you have now—he should find the position unsuitable and the advantages on the side of the enemy, he should examine the ground critically as he went out there and report to me the nearest position in the immediate neighborhood of Gettysburg where a concentration of the army would be more advantageous than at Gettysburg.

Early in the evening of July 1, I should suppose about 6 or 7 o'clock, I received a report from General Hancock, I think in person, giving me such an account of a position in the neighborhood of Gettysburg, which could be occupied by my army, as caused me at once to determine to fight a battle at that point; having reason to believe, from the account given to me of the operations of July 1, that the enemy were concentrating there. Therefore, without any reference to but entirely ignoring the preliminary order, which was a mere contingent one, and intended only to be executed under certain circumstances which had not occurred, and therefore the order fell to the ground—the army was ordered immediately to concentrate, and that night did concentrate, on the field of Gettysburg, where the battle was eventually fought out.

I dwell particularly upon the point of this order, in consequence of its having been reported on the floor of the Senate that an order to retreat had been given by me. No order to retreat was at any time given by me. But, as I have already stated, a preliminary order, a copy of which is herewith furnished (see copy appended to this deposition), was issued by me before I was aware that the enemy had crossed the mountain, and that there was any collision between the two forces. That preliminary

order was intended as an order of manœuvre, based upon contingencies which did not occur, and therefore the order was not executed. Such an order was given, as I have already acknowledged.

On the next day, July 2, the army was got into position at Gettysburg. Early in the morning it had been my intention, as soon as the 6th corps arrived on the ground—it having a distance of nearly thirty-two miles to march—and a preliminary order had been issued, to make a vigorous attack from our extreme right upon the enemy's left, the command of which was to be given to Major General Slocum, who commanded the 12th corps on the right. The attacking column was to be composed of the 12th, 5th, and 6th corps. Major General Slocum, however, reported that the character of the ground in front was unfavorable to making an attack; and the 6th corps, having so long a distance to march, and leaving at nine o'clock at night, did not reach the scene until about two o'clock in the afternoon. Under these circumstances I abandoned my intention to make an attack from my right, and, as soon as the 6th corps arrived, I directed the 5th corps, then in reserve on the right, to move over and be in reserve on the left. About three or half past three o'clock in the afternoon—it having been reported to me about two o'clock that the 6th corps had arrived—I proceeded from my headquarters, which were about the centre of the line, and in rear of the cemetery, to the extreme left, in order to see as to the posting of the 5th corps, and also to inspect the position of the 3d corps, about which I was in doubt.

I had sent instructions in the morning to General Sickles, commanding the 3d corps, directing him to form his corps in line of battle on the left of the 2d corps, commanded by General Hancock, and I had indicated to him, in general terms, that his right was to rest upon General Hancock's left; and his left was to extend to the Round Top mountain, plainly visible, if it was practicable to occupy it. During the morning I sent a staff officer to inquire of General Sickles whether he was in position. The reply was returned to me that General Sickles said there was no position there. I then sent back to him my general instructions which had been previously given. A short time afterwards General Sickles came to my headquarters, and I told him what my general views were, and intimated that he was to occupy the position that I understood General Hancock had put General Geary in the night previous. General Sickles replied that General Geary had no position, as far as he could understand. He then said to me that there was in the neighborhood of where his corps was some very good ground for artillery, and that he should like to have some staff officer of mine go out there and see as to the posting of artillery. He also asked me whether he was not authorized to post his corps in such manner as, in his judgment, he should deem the most suitable. I answered General Sickles, "Certainly, within the limits of the general instructions I have given you; any ground within those limits you choose to occupy I leave to you." And I directed Brigadier General Hunt, my chief of artillery, to accompany General Sickles and examine and inspect such positions as General Sickles thought good for artillery, and to give General Sickles the benefit of his judgment.

In consequence of these several messages to General Sickles, and this conversation with him, as soon as I heard that the 6th corps had arrived, and that the 5th corps was moving over to the left, I went out to the left for the purpose of inspecting General Sickles's position, and to see about the posting of the 5th corps. When I arrived upon the ground, which I did a few minutes before 4 o'clock in the afternoon, I found that General Sickles had taken up a position very much in advance of what it had been my intention that he should take; that he had thrown forward his right flank, instead of connecting with the left of General Hancock, something like a half or three-quarters of a mile in front of General Hancock, thus leaving a large gap between his right and General Hancock's left, and that his left, instead of being near the Round Top mountain, was in advance of the Round Top, and that his line, instead of being a prolongation of General Hancock's line, as I expected it would be, made an angle of about 45 degrees with General Hancock's line. As soon as I got upon the ground I sent for General Sickles and asked him to indicate to me his general position. When he had done so I told him it was not the position I had expected him to take; that he had advanced his line beyond the support of my army, and that I was very fearful he would be attacked and would lose the artillery, which he had put so far in front, before I could support it, or that if I undertook to support it I would have to abandon all the rest of the line which I had adopted—that is that I would have to fight the battle out there where he was. General Sickles expressed regret that he should have occupied a position which did not meet with my approval, and he very promptly said that he would withdraw his forces to the line which I had intended him to take. You could see the ridge, by turning around, which I had indicated to him. You could see the ridge, by turning around, which I had intended him to take. But I told him I was fearful that the enemy would not permit him to withdraw, and that there was no time for any further change or movement. And before I had finished that remark, or that sentence, the enemy's batteries opened upon him and the action commenced.

Question: Before General Sickles had time to retire his corps?

Answer: Yes, sir; while I was speaking to him. And the subsequent events of that battle fully confirmed my judgment upon this occasion. The enemy threw immense masses upon General Sickles's corps which, advanced and isolated in this way, it was not in my power to support promptly. At the same time that they threw these immense masses against General Sickles, a heavy column was thrown upon the Round Top mountain, which was the key-point of my whole position. If they had succeeded in occupying that, it would have prevented me from holding any of the ground which I subsequently held to the last. Immediately upon the batteries opening I sent several staff officers to hurry up the column under Major General Sykes, of the 5th corps, then on its way, and which I had expected would have reached there by that time. This column advanced, reached the ground in a short time, and, fortunately, General Sykes was enabled, by throwing a strong force upon Round Top mountain, where a most desperate and bloody struggle ensued, to drive

the enemy from it and secure our foothold upon that important position. In the meantime reinforcements were rapidly thrown from all parts of the line, so that by the time that General Sickles's corps, notwithstanding their gallantry and their stubborn resistance, was shattered and broken and driven into our lines, a reformation and a new line were made by the supports, and the enemy were repulsed and driven back to their former position.

I also make these remarks in extenso in consequence of my position and views in reference to the position occupied by General Sickles not being fully comprehended by the public, and not being expatiated on in my report. It is not my intention in these remarks to cast any censure upon General Sickles. I am of the opinion that General Sickles did what he thought was for the best; but I differed with him in judgment. And I maintain that subsequent events proved that my judgment was correct, and his judgment was wrong.

This terminated the contest of the second day. The enemy was repulsed and the line which I had intended originally General Sickles should form on was finally occupied by our troops and held to the last of the battle.

During these operations upon the left flank, a division and two brigades of the 12th corps, which held the right flank, were ordered over for the purpose of re-enforcing the left. Only one brigade, however, arrived in time to take any part in the action, the enemy having been repulsed before the rest of the force came up. The absence of this large proportion of the 12th corps caused my extreme right flank to be held by one single brigade of the 12th corps, commanded by General Greene. The enemy perceiving this, made a vigorous attack upon General Greene, but were held at bay by him for some time, until he was re-enforced by portions of the 1st and 11th corps, which were adjacent to him, when he succeeded in repulsing them.

During the night that portion of the 12th corps which had been sent over to the left was returned to its former position. On returning, however, they found that the enemy had advanced and were occupying a portion of the line of breastworks which the 12th corps had constructed before they left. The next morning at early daylight, the enemy having been re-enforced during the night, a spirited contest commenced, and was continued until 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, in which nearly the whole of the 12th corps were engaged. It resulted in their finally driving the enemy from the position he had occupied and securing the line of the right flank as it was designed it should be.

About one o'clock in the day, as near as I can remember, the enemy opened upon our lines, with, I should judge, about 125 guns, a severe cannonade which they kept up between one and two hours, and which was directed at my left and left centre; principally at my left centre. The object of this was to demoralize my command by the severe fire, the enemy hoping that they would be enabled to drive us back from our lines, and to injure my artillery; and then intending, as they subsequently did, to make a grand assault, which should secure them the victory. This

assault was made about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and was directed principally against that portion of the line commanded by Major General Hancock, on the left centre. After I became fully satisfied of the object of the enemy's fire, I directed my artillery to cease firing in order to save their ammunition, and also with the view of making the enemy believe that they had silenced our guns, and thus bring on their assault the sooner. It resulted as I desired. As soon as we ceased our firing the enemy ceased firing, and shortly afterwards they made their assault. This assault which was made in three lines of battle, which were apparently over a mile and a half in extent in front, was entirely and successfully repulsed, although the enemy bravely and gallantly advanced until they came within the guns of our line of battle; one of their generals, General Armistead, being wounded and captured inside of my batteries. This assault was repulsed, and the enemy retired about five o'clock.

As soon as the assault was repulsed, I went immediately to the extreme left of my line, with the determination of advancing the left and making an assault upon the enemy's lines. So soon as I arrived at the left I gave the necessary orders for the pickets and skirmishers in front to be thrown forward to feel the enemy, and for all preparations to be made for the assault. The great length of the line, and the time required to carry these orders out to the front, and the movement subsequently made, before the report given to me of the condition of the forces in the front and left, caused it to be so late in the evening as to induce me to abandon the assault which I had contemplated.

The next day, which was the 4th of July, it was reported to me from the extreme right that the enemy had disappeared from our front, but that he still maintained his appearance on the left and the left centre. I immediately directed General Slocum, in command of the right, to advance his corps and his skirmishers, and ascertain the position of the enemy. I likewise directed General Howard, in the centre, to push into Gettysburg, to see whether the enemy still occupied that town. I found, from the reports of those officers, that the enemy had retired from the circular position which they had occupied around us, and had assumed a position about parallel to my left and left centre. It rained very violently during portions of this day, so violently as to interrupt any very active operations if I had designed making them.

During the night of the 4th, the enemy, as I ascertained on the 5th, retired through the Cashtown and Fairfield passes. So soon as I was positively satisfied, from the reports of my officers, that the enemy had actually retired, I directed General Sedgwick, in command of the 6th corps, which corps had been comparatively unengaged during the battle, and was in full force and strength, to advance on the Fairfield road and pursue the enemy vigorously. At the same time I despatched a cavalry force to follow the retreating column on the Cashtown road, believing that the enemy was retiring into the Cumberland valley, and not satisfied what his further movements would be, not being satisfied that he was in full retreat for the Potomac, and not aware of what injury I had

done him in the battle of Gettysburg, although satisfied that I had punished him very severely.

From information which I had previously received of the character of the passes at Fairfield and Cashtown, having been informed that they had been fortified by the enemy, and that a small force could hold a large body in check for a considerable time, I made up my mind that a more rapid movement of my army could be made by the flank through the Boonsboro' Pass, than to attempt to follow the enemy on the road which he himself had taken. I therefore directed that orders should be prepared, but not issued, for the movement of the various corps by way of Middletown and South mountain towards Hagerstown. This was, I think, the 6th of July. The 5th of July, I think, was occupied, after the retreat of the enemy, in burying our dead and attending to the wounded, of which we had a large number.

During this day, the 6th, I received reports from General Sedgwick that he was following the enemy's rear guard as rapidly as he could, but that he had reason to believe, from reports of prisoners, or from other information (which I do not recollect) that the main body of the enemy was around and in the vicinity of Fairfield Pass, and that it was not impossible that another engagement might be had with the enemy in those mountains. Under those circumstances, as a matter of security, and also willing to meet such a movement on the part of the enemy, I directed that two corps, I think the 3d and 5th—I am not positive about that—should be immediately moved in the direction of General Sedgwick, so as to be near him to assist him if he were attacked, or to re-enforce him if he himself required re-enforcement. When I had given this order I found that the other order, for the movement of the whole army, had been issued by my chief of staff, General Butterfield, without my authority. I so informed General Butterfield; and at the same time sent officers and arrested the progress of the 3d and 1st corps, which had not moved very far, and detained them to sustain General Sedgwick in case it was necessary. The other corps moved on.

During that day, towards evening or at night, I received a report from General Sedgwick that he had pushed the enemy's rear guard as far as Fairfield Pass; that the Fairfield Pass was a very strong position; that a very small force could hold him in check for a considerable time, though he could finally take it; and that, in his judgment, it would involve delay and waste of time to endeavor to push the enemy any further on that road. Upon receiving this information I directed the whole army to move down toward Middletown; and directed General Sedgwick to move from Fairfield pass in the direction of Emmettsburg, leaving a force of cavalry and infantry to harass the rear of the enemy.

I have been thus particular in speaking of these movements because a report has also reached me that I lost a day by having stopped these two corps to sustain and re-enforce General Sedgwick, in case he should require it.

After reaching Middletown, it having been reported to me by my corps commanders that there were many necessary articles of clothing

and other supplies that the army were very much in want of, and having myself, as I rode along, seen, I may say hundreds of men walking over these broken turnpikes barefooted on these long marches, I deemed it my duty to remain at Middletown one day in order to obtain the necessary supplies, and put my army in condition, and give them some rest. I may say that it was not till the end of that day that the whole army had come up, for, in consequence of the heavy rains which, as I have already stated, visited us on the 4th of July, the roads over which we had moved, notwithstanding they were the best roads in Pennsylvania, had been so cut up by the passage of my trains and artillery, that a considerable portion of the trains were in the rear, and the army did not get up and in hand until the close of the day which I remained for the purpose of obtaining supplies. As soon as the army was in condition we moved from Middletown through the South mountain.

I ought to have stated before, that in advancing from Frederick, upon assuming command of the army, I had directed a portion of the garrison at Harper's Ferry, under General French—which was placed under my command by the general-in-chief—7,000 of that garrison, to move up from Harper's Ferry to Frederick, to hold Frederick and the line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, not knowing but that my communication would be dependent upon that road. The balance of that garrison, consisting of 4,000 men, I at first ordered to remain and hold Maryland heights. I did this, not because I considered the occupation of Harper's Ferry an important matter so far as the crossing of the Potomac River was concerned, for I did not, any more than any other place where the river could be crossed. But I did consider it important to hold that point as a *débouché* into the Cumberland valley, so that, if upon my return I should have found the enemy occupying the other passes, so long as I held Harper's Ferry I could always enter. Having been informed, however, that the supplies at Harper's Ferry were limited, and that in consequence of the railroad and the canal being right alongside the river and exposed to fire from the other side, the enemy with a small force could cut off communication with Harper's Ferry and prevent them from being supplied, and not knowing how long a time the campaign I was entering on might last, I yielded to the suggestions made to me to evacuate Harper's Ferry entirely; and late on the night of the 28th of June I ordered 4,000 men previously ordered to remain there to garrison the place, to collect all the canal-boats that they could, load them with the public property at Harper's Ferry, so that nothing should be destroyed, and proceed with them down to Washington, where, in case of any disaster to me, they could act as part of the defence of Washington; or, in the event of my being successful, they could be returned to my army. Those orders I believe were executed; General French occupied Frederick and threw a force into South Mountain pass.

As soon as it became evident that the enemy were retiring, information was sent to General French, and he was directed to immediately seize and hold South Mountain pass, and also reoccupy Harper's Ferry, bringing up the force from Washington for that purpose. All of which orders

were not only executed, but General French, in advance of any instructions to that effect, had sent a cavalry force in his command across the mountain during the battle, which had penetrated as far as Williamsport, where they partially destroyed or rendered ineffective a pontoon bridge of the enemy, capturing the greater portion of the small guard left there to defend it.

Having crossed the South mountain, I moved my army forward, by way of Boonsboro', until about the 12th of July I got into position in front of the enemy, whom I found on a line extending from Hagerstown towards a place called Downiesville, I think. So soon as my troops were in line, or as soon as my army was in hand and ready for offensive operations, although I had had no opportunity of examining critically and closely the enemy's position, still knowing the importance of not permitting the enemy to recross the river without a further action, it was my desire to attack him in that position. Having, however, been in command of the army not more than twelve or fourteen days, and in view of the important and tremendous issues involved in the result, knowing that if I were defeated the whole question would be reversed, the road to Washington and to the north open, and all the fruits of my victory at Gettysburg dissipated, I did not feel that I would be right in assuming the responsibility of blindly attacking the enemy without any knowledge of his position. I therefore called a council of my corps commanders, who were the officers to execute this duty, if it was determined upon, and laid before them the precise condition of affairs.

Question : Will you, as you pass along, give us the names of those corps commanders in that council?

Answer : The 1st corps was represented by General Wadsworth; General Newton, who commanded the corps, being sick at the time. The 2d corps was commanded, I think, by General William Hays; the 3d by General French; the 5th by General Sykes; the 6th by General Sedgwick; the 11th by General Howard, and the 12th by General Slocum.

I represented to those generals, so far as I knew it, the situation of affairs. I told them that I had reason to believe, from all I could ascertain, that General Lee's position was a very strong one, and that he was prepared to give battle and defend it if attacked; that it was not in my power, from a want of knowledge of the ground, and from not having had time to make reconnoissances, to indicate any precise mode of attack or any precise point of attack; that, nevertheless, I was in favor of moving forward and attacking the enemy and taking the consequences; but that I left it to their judgment, and would not do it unless it met with their approval. The opinion of that council was very largely opposed to any attack without further examination. I cannot state positively what each individual vote was without referring to my papers. But I am now under the impression that there were but two officers decidedly in favor of attacking; I think that General Wadsworth and General Howard were the only two in favor of attacking, while all the rest were opposed to it.

In view of this opinion of my subordinate officers I yielded, or ab-

stained from ordering an assault, but gave the necessary directions for such an examination of the enemy's position as would enable us to form some judgment as to where he might be attacked with some degree and probability of success.

The 13th of July, which was the day spent in this examination, was very rainy and misty, and not much information was obtained; nevertheless, on the night of the 13th I directed that the next morning at daylight the whole army should move forward with a view to attacking the enemy. This order was duly executed, but during the night of the 13th the enemy had retired across the river.

It is proper I should say that an examination of the enemy's lines, and of the defences which he had made—of which I now have a map from an accurate survey, which can be laid before your committee—brings me clearly to the opinion that an attack, under the circumstances in which I had proposed to make it, would have resulted disastrously to our arms.

Question : Will you give us the reasons for that opinion?

Answer : It is founded upon the strength of their position. I will say that if I had attacked the enemy in the position which he then occupied—he having the advantage of position and being on the defensive, his artillery in position and his infantry behind parapets and rifle-pits—the very same reasons and causes which produced my success at Gettysburg would have operated in his favor there, and be likely to produce success on his part.

Question : Have you any reason to suppose that after that terrible artillery fire at Gettysburg his ammunition was nearly exhausted?

Answer : No, sir; from all the information I could obtain—which I acknowledge, however, was quite scanty—I had reason to believe that ammunition trains had been brought from Winchester and crossed on the ferry at Williamsport for the supply of General Lee's army; and from the character of the battle at Gettysburg, which consisted in a series of offensive operations on his part, mostly subjected to artillery fire, I had no reason to believe that the expenditure of ammunition by him had been such as to reduce him to a low point.

Question : You are now speaking of small-arm ammunition.

Answer : Yes, sir; and all the information which I obtained led to the belief that his army had been supplied with ammunition from Winchester, for I had positive information that ammunition trains had been ferried across at Williamsport; and my opinion is now that General Lee evacuated that position, not from any want of ammunition, or the fear that he would be dislodged from it by any active operations on my part, but that he was fearful that a force would be sent by Harper's Ferry to cut off his communications, which I had intended to do, having brought up a bridge from Washington and sent the cavalry down there, and that he could not have maintained that position probably a day if his communications had been cut. That was what caused him to retire.

Question : Did you discover, after the battle of Gettysburg, any symptoms of demoralization in Lee's army, such as excessive straggling, or anything of the kind?

Answer : No, sir; I saw nothing of that kind. I have no doubt his army was somewhat demoralized, for every army is, in some measure, demoralized after a defeat. But I doubt whether it was any more demoralized than we were when we fell back to Washington in 1862, after the second battle of Groveton, under General Pope. Then in forty-eight hours afterwards, when we got over on this side and got into the presence of the enemy, our morale was just as good as ever it was. I do not think that a great many stragglers or deserters from General Lee's army were picked up.

Question : I will ask you, in this connexion, about the comparative strength of the two armies at the battle of Gettysburg. What was your opinion about that?

Answer : My opinion about that was that General Lee was, as far as I could tell, about 10,000 or 15,000 my superior.

Question : What was your strength upon that battle-field?

Answer : Including all arms of the service, my strength was a little under 100,000 men—about 95,000. I think General Lee had about 90,000 infantry, from 4,000 to 5,000 artillery, and about 10,000 cavalry.

Question : There were other troops of ours at that time under General Schenck?

Answer : Yes, sir; and I had command of everybody. I had command of General Schenck, of General Couch, and of general everybody else.

Question : You did not bring General Schenck's forces into the field?

Answer : I never had any return from him; I did not know what force he had.

Question : What was the strength of the force about Washington?

Answer : I do not know what the strength about Washington was; but I understood that Washington was quite stripped.

Question : Did not General Heintzelman have a corps here?

Answer : I do not know. The very next day after I took command of the army I had no telegraphic communication with General Halleck. I think the returns showed me, when I took command of the army, amounted to about 105,000 men; included in those were the 11,000 of General French, which I did not bring up, which would reduce it down to about 94,000. Of that 94,000 I was compelled to leave a certain portion in the rear to guard my baggage trains.

Question : You say that the enemy had 125 pieces of artillery that he brought to bear upon you on the third day of the fight?

Answer : That is my estimate; their own estimate is 115 pieces.

Question : Was not that a heavier artillery fire on both sides than was ever before in a battle?

Answer : I must have had on the field at Gettysburg but little short of 300 guns; and I think the report of my chief of artillery was that there were not more than two batteries that were not in service during that battle.

Question : Was not that a greater proportion of artillery than is generally used in battles?

Answer: I think it was. I know I had then, and have now, more artillery with me than is usual. The artillery I have now is the artillery which General McClellan had when he had an army of 150,000, and he got a little more artillery even than was necessary for that army, because it was thought at that time that artillery would be the turning-point; and I have kept all the artillery while my infantry has been reduced. I think I had some 325 or 330 guns last summer; but I had some heavy siege guns which I had sent to the rear. I think there were about twenty-five guns with my trains at Westminster. I only had field-guns on the field.

In reference to the re-enforcements, I desire to say that after moving from Gettysburg, the forces under General French, which I had left at Frederick, amounting to about 8,000 men, were added to my army. That was the only addition to my army until I had arrived in the presence of General Lee's army. Subsequent to my crossing the mountains, but before the day that I advanced to attack the enemy at Williamsport, I received notice of troops arriving both at Frederick and at Harper's Ferry. But in connexion with that notice came information that those troops were mostly nine-months men from North Carolina and the Peninsula, who had but one or two days longer to serve, and who were from that fact in a very unsuitable moral condition to bring to the front; and so little reliance did I place upon them that I brought none of them any further to the front than Frederick, South mountain, and Harper's Ferry, to cover my communications in case anything happened to me.

And about the 12th of July, I should think, in connexion with a brigade of infantry, and some cavalry which I had left to follow the retreat of the enemy through Fairfield pass, and who joined me about that time, I also received under General William F. Smith a portion of General Couch's command, charged with the defences of the Susquehanna, and which General Couch had sent forward after the enemy evacuated Carlisle. General Smith arrived at Boonsboro' with a force of from 4,000 to 5,000 men; but he reported to me that those men were entirely new and totally undisciplined, and when I offered to attach him as a division to one of my corps, and put him in the front he advised so strongly against it that I left him in the rear at Boonsboro'. The foregoing are all the re-enforcements which I can now remember of receiving, unless there may have been one or two regiments under General Gordon, which were old and efficient regiments, and which arrived about the 12th or 13th of July. So that I may say, notwithstanding I am aware that every exertion was made to send forward to me all the available troops that could be obtained from everywhere, that really and practically, with the exception of General French's command which was attached to the army when I took command of it, I was in front of the enemy at Williamsport with very much the same army that I moved from Gettysburg.

Question: The enemy recrossed the river at Williamsport?

Answer: Yes, sir.

Question: Go on with your narrative, if you please.

Answer: When the enemy had recrossed the Potomac, the question came up as to how the further pursuit was to be continued. I was informed that it was the experience of Major General McClellan the year before, when placed in similar circumstances, and when the question was fully and thoroughly discussed, that it was impracticable to pursue the enemy in the valley of Virginia because of the difficulty of supplying an army in that valley with a single-track railroad in very bad order from Harper's Ferry to Winchester. I therefore determined to adopt the same plan of movement as that adopted the year previous, which was to move upon the enemy's flank through Loudon valley. I accordingly put the army in motion for Berlin, in Maryland, where bridges were thrown across the Potomac, and the army was moved as rapidly as possible, until it occupied a position the general line of which was the turn-pike from Leesburg to Winchester.

Whilst in this position I could not ascertain from scouts, or from any other means of obtaining information which I possessed, that the army under General Lee, which was known to be in the valley and extending from Winchester to Martinsburg, had made any movement. Unwilling to move beyond this line, which would have enabled him to pass in my rear and come down that pike from Winchester to Leesburg, and thus have left the road open to Washington, I halted for a day, throwing forward my cavalry to occupy the lower passes of Manassas gap, and to ascertain, if I possibly could, what the movements, if any, were to be of General Lee. During this day we were informed from our signals on Ashby's gap and on Snicker's gap, which we held, of the movement of General Lee's army up the valley in further retreat from Winchester. I immediately put my army in motion, and directed five corps in the direction of Manassas gap, putting the 3d corps in advance, with instructions that they should move to Manassas gap that night, and the next morning at daylight advance through the gap and push on to Front Royal. The 3d corps reached Manassas gap some time during the night, and the movement was made the next day. Soon after passing a point previously occupied by our cavalry, the enemy was encountered in some force. Some skirmishing ensued, but they were gradually pushed through the gap, until a little before sundown, when we arrived within sight of Front Royal—and out of the gap, into a sufficiently open country to deploy the 3d corps, or any additional force—the enemy were found in line of battle with a number of pieces of artillery in position. Every disposition was made for a battle the next day, which I believed or hoped would take place, supposing that I had interrupted the retreat of General Lee, and that he would be compelled to defend that position in order to secure his trains.

During the night, however, the enemy retired. It was subsequently ascertained that he had been moving with great rapidity over several roads further to the west than the road to Front Royal, one of which passed through Strasburg, and that he had conducted his retreat with so much rapidity that the force we had encountered at Front Royal the day previously was his rear-guard. Having failed in this attempt to cut off

his retreat, I then retired through Manassas gap and proceeded to the Rappahannock, General Lee, in the meantime, retiring to Culpeper and taking up a position between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan. Upon my arrival at the Rappahannock, which was towards the close of July, I communicated my views to the government, in which I expressed the opinion that the further pursuit of General Lee should be continued at that time, inasmuch as I believed that our relative forces were more favorable to us than they would be at any subsequent time if we gave him time to recuperate. It was thought proper, however, by the general-in-chief to direct me to take up a threatening attitude upon the Rappahannock, but not to advance.

Question : About what time was that?

Answer: About the 1st of August. I did as directed; took up a position upon the Rappahannock, and immediately threw out my cavalry and had a fight at Brandy Station. That was the first fight at Brandy Station that General Buford was in. This position was maintained until about the middle of August, I think, when my force was diminished, first by the detachment of a division sent to South Carolina, and subsequently by a considerable body of troops which were sent to New York for the purpose of enforcing the draft. Some time after this, about the middle of September, I received information which induced me to believe, or which satisfied me, that Longstreet's corps, or a portion of it, from General Lee's army, had been detached to the southwest. Immediately upon receiving this information, and without waiting for instructions, I sent my cavalry across the Rappahannock, drove the enemy across the Rapidan, and subsequently followed with my whole army, occupying Culpeper and the position between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan. I found the enemy, although diminished by the departure of Longstreet's corps, still in a very strong position on the Rapidan—strong by nature, and which he had made still stronger by his works—so much so that I considered it impossible to attack him successfully in his front, and that any further operations would have to be made upon the one or other of his flanks.

I was entirely ignorant of the country, and could get no information except by actually sending my cavalry over it. Some time was necessarily consumed in making reconnoissances and obtaining information of the country.

In the meantime, just as I had made up my mind upon a plan of operations, I received an intimation from the department, or from the general-in-chief, that it was absolutely essential that my army should be still further weakened by the loss of two corps for the operations in Tennessee. Those corps were detached, and that suspended any operations of importance on my part until the return of the troops which had been sent to New York. Those troops were returned to me between the first and middle of October, but very much reduced; I think not more than two-thirds of those which I had sent away. In the meantime, however, I had received some accessions to my army from the draft. But of the conscripts who came in, considerable numbers deserted soon after

arriving. The most of them were raw and unreliable, and could not be considered by me as being practically of much value until they had been some time in the army.

About the time when my troops finally returned from New York, which was somewhere about the middle of October, when I had again determined upon a forward movement against the enemy, General Lee advanced against me. The first intimation which I had of this manœuvre was a report from my pickets from all parts of my line that the enemy were withdrawing from the Rapidan, and the general impression and belief was that he was withdrawing from the line of the Rapidan. I myself was not satisfied of that; nevertheless dispositions of the army were made to test the question whether he was withdrawing from the Rapidan, or whether it was a manœuvre for some other purpose.

At the same time that it was observed that his force upon the Rapidan had been very much diminished, there was an apparent movement of cavalry and some infantry on our right flank, which was believed to be a mere demonstration to throw me off the track, while he withdrew his army. I therefore made dispositions for the cavalry to cross the Rapidan upon my left, and for two corps of infantry to ford the Rapidan. The day these dispositions were made, I became satisfied that the enemy were moving on my right flank, with the determination of getting in my rear and cutting off my communications. If I had believed that the enemy would have attacked me at Culpeper Court House, around which and towards the Rapidan my army was posted, I never should have moved from there. My desire was to give battle to General Lee; but his movement by the way of Sperryville and Woodville, so far to my right, satisfied me that he was not going to attack me, and that he was moving off to seize the Rappahannock, or some point on the railroad in my rear, cut off my communications, and compel me to move out and attack him to my disadvantage.

With this view I directed a retrograde movement of the army to the line of the Rappahannock, which was accomplished. I cannot recollect the exact date—I think about the 10th or 11th of October. The army reached the Rappahannock, and in the afternoon I had prepared the necessary instructions and orders to move the army that night, or the next morning, and occupy the line of Warrenton and Warrenton Junction, which I hoped to reach in advance of the enemy, and there give him battle.

Before those orders were issued, however, the rear-guard of my army returned under the command of Major General Pleasonton commanding the cavalry, and General Sykes commanding the infantry. From the representations of those officers as to the manner in which they had been followed in their retreat, and from the appearances which they had seen on the field, it was their conviction that the enemy had moved into Culpeper, and had really occupied it, and were in my flank. Under this belief, and being anxious to give him battle, it not being my desire at all to avoid a battle, except to avoid it upon his terms, instead of ordering the movement to Warrenton and Warrenton Junction, which I had pre-

viously designed, I directed the movement of three corps early the next morning, amounting to about 30,000 men, with which I marched back again in the direction of Culpeper, with the expectation that if General Lee was there we would have a fight.

It was not till late in that day, and after those troops had all marched over and got into position, that I received information from General Gregg, who was in command of the cavalry on my right flank, that he had been driven across what is called the Hazel river by a large force of the enemy; that he had, subsequently, been driven at Sulphur Springs by cavalry, artillery, and infantry, or that, in other words, the whole rebel army was still continuing their movement on my flank in the direction of Warrenton. This information came late in the night of the day in which I had moved 30,000 men in the direction of Culpeper. By this movement I had lost a day, and, in consequence of this information, it was necessary for me to make another retrograde movement, in order to assume the position which it was my desire to do, and which I was determined, if possible, to do, so as to place myself between the enemy and Washington, with my back towards Washington and my front towards the enemy. I therefore moved back as far as Auburn, and Greenwich, and Catlett's Station. Those were the three points occupied by my army along the line of the railroad.

During that night I vainly endeavored, by means of my cavalry, to get some information as to the exact position and movements of the enemy. From all that I could ascertain, I had reason to believe that the enemy was continuing his movement along what is called the Warrenton pike, and that his object was to cross Bull Run and get possession of the heights of Centreville, if possible, thus interposing himself between me and Washington, and preventing me from opening my communications without first attacking him in that strong position. It subsequently turned out that in this I was mistaken, and that, notwithstanding my losing a day, I had moved with more celerity than the enemy, and was a little in his advance. If I had known this at the time I would have given the enemy battle next day in the position that I had occupied at Auburn and Greenwich. But under the conviction that he was moving on, and had moved on, I that night gave orders for a further retrograde movement, until I occupied the line of Centreville and Bull Run. In performing the movement the next day, I ascertained, when too late to take advantage of it, that the enemy had not moved on the pike, but that he had moved across with the expectation of falling upon my flank and rear, and that his advance, under General Heth, had encountered my rear-guard, which was the 2d corps, under the command of General Warren, and had been very severely handled by General Warren, who captured five guns and numerous prisoners, and repulsed all their attacks, and succeeded during the night in withdrawing his corps and taking his position upon the line of Bull Run.

After occupying this line, and ascertaining that the enemy did not continue his pursuit, as I presumed he would do, I determined immediately to return and attack him. But, unfortunately, there came up a

very heavy rain, which raised Bull Run so as to render it unfordable; and not anticipating that I should have any occasion to use pontoon bridges at all, my whole pontoon train had been sent some eight or ten miles to the rear with my trains from the Rappahannock, and it was necessary, therefore, either that I should wait for the falling of Bull Run or send back for my bridges, which latter measure I adopted. But by the time the pontoon train had arrived the stream had subsided, and the army was then put in motion and advanced again.

During this time, however, which was some two or three days, the enemy had been occupied in destroying the railroad between Broad run and the Rappahannock, a distance of some twenty-five or twenty-six miles. So soon as they found they could not get a battle upon their own terms, and that I had got into such a position that if they attacked me they would probably be defeated, they abandoned all idea of active operations, destroyed the railroad, and retired. I continued the advance until I got to Warrenton, which I reached some time about the latter part of October. The enemy retired, however, across the Rappahannock. I was detained at Warrenton some eight or ten days until the railroad between Broad run and Warrenton Junction could be repaired, which portion of the road was necessary in order to enable me to receive my supplies; as soon as that road was repaired I immediately moved again. The enemy was then in position along the Rappahannock, at Rappahannock Station and Kelly's ford. I advanced upon both of those places, succeeded in surprising the enemy, forcing a passage, compelling him to retreat rapidly and hurriedly to the Rapidan. The army was then moved across the Rappahannock and placed in position between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan, somewhere near its former position, but not quite so far to the front as before, because I had not my communications open. Here a further delay was rendered necessary until the railroad could be completed from Warrenton Junction and the Rappahannock, and my communications opened.

I should have stated that before I left my position at Warrenton and Warrenton Junction, and before I crossed the Rappahannock, it was my desire to move from that position rapidly and seize the heights of Fredericksburg, changing my base and line of communication from the Orange and Alexandria railroad to the Aquia Creek railroad. I believed, from the position of General Lee's army, and from the fact that he would presume that it would take me a long time to repair the railroad, and from information that I got that he was going into winter quarters, that any movement I might make with rapidity would be a surprise to him, and I was satisfied that I could occupy the heights of Fredericksburg before he could get down there. If he followed me down there to give me battle, that would be just what I wanted; if he did not, then I could take up my position there, open my communications, and then advance upon him or threaten Richmond. But upon proposing this plan to the general-in-chief, it was not approved.

Question: What was his objection to it?

Answer: The only objection he made was that he did not approve of any change of base; that any tactical movement I chose to make I was

at liberty to make; that if I chose to make any movement against Lee I was at liberty to do so; but that he did not approve or recommend any change of base.

Question: When you retired on that retreat to Centreville, it was not with any view to avoid a battle?

Answer: Not at all. Why should I avoid a battle, when it was my business to fight? This matter must be settled by fighting.

Question: Your constant object was to bring on a battle on advantageous terms?

Answer: My object was to manœuvre so as to bring my army into such a position that, when giving battle to the enemy, I would have a reasonable probability of success; and in the event of a disaster, I would have a line of retreat or line of communication open.

Question: In all this manœuvring between here and the Rappahannock there has always been a most sedulous caution on our part to keep between Washington and the enemy. Suppose the enemy should be rash enough to come in in front of you, and between you and Washington; then his communications would be cut off, would they not?

Answer: Certainly. That is what I was trying to accomplish at Williamsport, but he fell back too soon for me; he got back to the river and got into the position I wanted to go into myself.

Question: Did your army destroy any portion of the road when you retired?

Answer: When I moved back from the Rappahannock I destroyed the bridge across the Rappahannock.

Question: What was the object of that?

Answer: To prevent the enemy from using the bridge. If I had not done that, when he came to any part of the road he could run his cars from Culpeper right down there. I did not destroy, as I might have done, the bridge that was near Culpeper.

Question: In the retiring of your army, did we lose much military stores?

Answer: None at all that I am aware of, except a small quantity of ammunition that was destroyed by the stupidity of an ordnance clerk, he being under the impression that the army had all gone beyond him, though they were in fact all around him at that time. That ammunition was destroyed at Bealton Station by a subordinate agent of the ordnance department without authority.

Question: What was the strength of your army about this time, according to your recollection of it?

Answer: As near as I can judge my army contained of efficient men, equipped and armed, such as I could bring into battle, between 60,000 and 70,000 men.

Question: What was the strength of the enemy according to the best estimate you could make?

Answer: I think he had about 60,000 men; I thought I was probably from 8,000 to 10,000 his superior.

Question: Please go on with your narrative.

Answer: As soon as the railroad to the Rappahannock was completed, and the railroad bridge across that stream completed, and the necessary arrangements made for a depot at Brandy Station, so that the army could be properly supplied, I made a further movement to endeavor to engage General Lee in battle, or at least compel him to retire from the line of the Rapidan. This movement was made upon General Lee's right flank. I had ascertained that whilst he held the line of the Rapidan, from about Morton's ford to Liberty Mills, which is about west from Orange Court House, he had abandoned the guarding of the lower fords of the river, but depended for the defence of his right flank upon a line of intrenchments which he had constructed perpendicularly to the river at Morton's ford, and extending down to a place called Bartlett's Mills, on Mine run, which is a small tributary of the Rapidan. I could not hear of any intrenchments or preparations beyond Bartlett's Mills; nor could I hear that he had made any intrenchments on the plank road and Old Town pike-road, two of the main communications between Fredericksburg and Orange Court House, or that he had made any arrangements for receiving an attack. I had satisfactory information that the line from Bartlett's Mills around to Rapidan Station was occupied and defended by General Ewell's corps, and that the other corps of General Lee's army, commanded by General Hill, was extended from somewhere about Rapidan Station away down somewhere towards Charlottesville. With this knowledge, it was my expectation and design, by moving rapidly across the river at the lower fords where I knew there would be no opposition, and by marching forward and seizing the plank and turn-pike roads, and advancing on them towards Orange Court House, to encounter first a concentration of Ewell's corps. And I hoped, by having my army, as it would be, concentrated in this movement, to throw such forces upon Ewell's corps as either to destroy him, or to so cripple him before General Hill could arrive, that I should then be able to turn upon Hill, and in this way I should have an opportunity of meeting General Lee's army in detail, and secure an effective lodgment at Orange Court House and Gordonsville.

The army was directed to move about the 24th of November, I think. A storm occurred, however, which created a delay of two days, and the army moved on the 26th of November. Various circumstances occurred to cause delay which I had not expected—some arising from obstacles that I could not overcome or anticipate; others from the failure or neglect of subordinate officers to do what I had a right to expect they would have done. The first of these obstacles was the failure of the 3d corps, commanded by Major General French, to arrive at the Rapidan river within three hours of the time that the other corps arrived, having no longer distance to march than they had. Thus caused a delay in the movement of the whole army for three hours, because I would not allow the other corps to cross until he was ready to cross, not knowing what I should encounter on the other side.

Question: What excuse did General French give for his slowness of movement?

Answer: The excuse was the fault of the commander of one of his divisions. Another obstacle was the fact that the river Rapidan proved to be a little broader than the engineers had estimated it, so that every one of the four bridges, which I had directed to be thrown across, was one boat too short, and trestle work and temporary means had to be provided to increase their length, which caused some delay. Another reason was the very precipitous character of the banks of the Rapidan at all the fords, which occasioned a delay in the passage of artillery and trains.

In consequence of these obstacles and these difficulties, the army, instead of forming a concentration on the 26th of November, as I expected, at Robertson's tavern, on the pike, and at some church—I forget the name—on the plank road, had actually only crossed the Rapidan. The next day the movements of the 3d corps were again much slower than I had expected, or than I now believe were necessary. And instead of that corps effecting a junction at Robertson's tavern, they remained halted at a point three or four miles distant from that tavern, where they were attacked in the afternoon by the enemy and held in check until late in the evening.

In the meantime the second column, under the command of Major General Warren, consisting of only one corps which had reached Robertson's tavern, was not allowed by me to advance and attack the enemy until communication was opened with the right column, which consisted of two of my largest corps and constituted nearly one-half of my army. And it was not until late at night that this communication was opened, and that I was enabled to make any movement in advance of Robertson's tavern. The consequence was, that the next morning, when we did advance, there was no enemy in our front. They had withdrawn to the position of Mine run; that is to say, a prolongation of the line which I knew previously existed, but which I supposed terminated at Bartlett's Mills, on Mine run.

Upon following the enemy to this position I found it to be an exceedingly strong one, both by nature and by the artificial means which, in a short time—they had had not more than 24 hours—they had made, and which rendered the position an almost impregnable one. The army was immediately, and as rapidly as possible, put in position in front of the enemy's position at Mine run, and reconnoissances were made with the view of ascertaining a point of attack. In order to secure an efficient and active reconnoissance, orders were given to every corps commander to prepare himself to attack the enemy in his immediate front, and to examine critically and to ascertain as early as he possibly could where would be the best place to attack the enemy.

At the same time that these reconnoissances were made I sent a force, consisting of the 2d corps, under command of Major General Warren—increased by a division of the 6th corps, so that he had a force of 15,000 or 16,000 men—with directions to move upon the enemy's right flank and endeavor to find out how far his line extended, and if possible, to outflank him and to turn him.

About 5 or 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the 30th of November, I think, General Sedgwick, on my extreme right, reported to me, through General Wright, that there was a point of the enemy's left which he thought weak and assailable; that the enemy evidently had not expected an attack there, and had not prepared it with the same degree of care that they had prepared other portions of their lines.

About this time Major Ludlow, one of my aides-de-camp, and whom I had sent with General Warren, returned from his column and reported to me that General Warren had taken a position on the plank road extending from what was called Catharpin road, by which we had out-flanked the enemy's line of works; that he had distinctly seen them prolonging their line of battle to meet his movement; that General Warren was on high ground which commanded the enemy's line, and that everything was most favorable for an attack from his position. This was about 6 o'clock in the afternoon, about sunset. I had also received a report through my engineers that in front of the 3d corps, commanded by General French, they thought was an opportunity more practicable for making an attack than upon other portions of the line, although they considered it pretty desperate there.

I therefore determined that the next morning at daylight I would assault the enemy at three points—on the extreme right, where General Sedgwick had found a weak point; on the extreme left, where I had understood there would be no difficulty in General Warren's attacking; and in the centre, in front of General French. Before these orders were issued, however, General Warren himself came to my headquarters about 8 or 9 o'clock at night. He confirmed all that Major Ludlow had said to me, and was even stronger and more emphatic in the opinion which he gave of the facility of making an attack upon the enemy's right; and indeed so confident was he that he expressed the opinion that the enemy would not be found there the next morning; that they would be compelled to fall back.

Under these circumstances, having great confidence in General Warren's judgment, and inasmuch as General French had given his opinion against attacking in his own front, I changed my plans so far as to take two of General French's divisions, amounting to over 10,000 men, and send them over to General Warren, thus making his force some 25,000 or 26,000 men, and abandoned my centre attack. I then issued the orders that the next morning at the designated time the assault should be made on the extreme right by General Sedgwick, and on the extreme left by General Warren, and that when those assaults were reported successful, which I had reason to believe they certainly would be, then the force which I retained in the centre to hold the centre should be advanced, and so have the whole army in the battle. Everything was arranged for this purpose.

The next morning, however, at the time designated for the assault, which was after our batteries had been opened for some time, and just before General Sedgwick was to make his assault, which was directed to be made about one hour after General Warren's attack, as General War-

ren's was to be the main attack, hoping that the enemy would throw reinforcements over there and weaken the left. About the time for General Sedgwick to make his assault an aide-de-camp arrived from General Warren, handing me a despatch, the substance of which was that by daylight, and upon a closer inspection of the enemy's works, he found they had been largely re-enforced during the night, had constructed works which did not exist the day before, and that so strong was their position, and, in his judgment, so precarious were the chances of success in an attack, that he had assumed the responsibility, inasmuch as the attack had been based upon his judgment, of suspending the attack until further orders should be received from me, it being his clear judgment that morning that there was no chance of success in attacking there.

In this embarrassing position in which I found myself, having put nearly the half of my army over on my left, under the command of General Warren, where I thought that success was absolutely certain, and it being impossible to withdraw them back in time into a position where they could sustain General Sedgwick, it was out of the question to allow General Sedgwick, to make his isolated attack, because, even if he should succeed, it was necessary, after we had broken through the enemy's lines, to fight a battle with them; for the taking the line was only getting on the ground to fight, and I had no means of re-enforcing or supporting him, for the half of my army was tied up on my left flank under General Warren; I therefore, just in time, directed General Sedgwick to suspend his attack.

In the meantime I mounted my horse and rode over to General Warren's position, to see if possible, by discussion with him, and by examination, it would not be possible some time during the day to make an attack, so that an attack should still be made. I rode over to General Warren, and found that his opinion was firm and conclusive against an attack there. In the mean time I received word from General Sedgwick that, although he had taken every precaution to conceal his movements, the opening of his batteries had given the enemy information that they might be attacked there, and they had gone to work to make the position in front of him as strong as any other part of their line; so that every hour it became more questionable about making an attack there.

Finding this to be the case, there remained but one alternative, and that was, to make a further effort to move to the enemy's flank and get further around towards Orange Court House, and to get in some position where he would not be able to intrench himself before I could attack him. Had it been any other season of the year than the early part of December, I should undoubtedly have made that movement. But at that period of the year, in which bad weather was to be expected at any moment, I did not deem it advisable to do so. Indeed, it was extraordinary that we had such good weather as we had in our movements. In taking up the position I then occupied I had not been obliged to bring my heavy trains across the river, but had left them on the other side guarded by a portion of my cavalry. But if I made this further move-

ment it would be absolutely necessary to bring my trains over to bring my supplies to me, because I could not get supplies for my army otherwise.

When this period arrived it was the 3d of December; I had consumed about one-half of the supplies I had brought with me; I had abandoned my communications entirely. And in view of the season of the year, the impossibility of moving from that place if there came on even a couple of hours of rain; having failed in my first plan, which was to attack the enemy before they could concentrate; and then having failed in my plan to attack them after they had concentrated in the manner in which I have related, I concluded that under the circumstances it was impossible for me to do anything more; I therefore withdrew my army and returned to my former position.

There was a third course which I might have pursued; which was, in spite of all obstacles, all opinions and all judgments, to make an assault in the enemy's direct front, and in the face of all their obstacles there. But I was so clearly satisfied, from my own personal observation of such portions of their line as I was able to visit, that such an assault would be hopeless, that I never had any hesitation whatever about the course I should pursue in the matter.

Question: Did the enemy come out of their works when you retired?

Answer: No, sir; I do not think they followed us, except with some of their cavalry; they were acting entirely on the defensive. We withdrew during the night; and I think by six or seven o'clock the next morning—an hour or so after daylight—we were all across the river, and the bridges were up. Having no trains on that side, we could make a very rapid movement.

Question: Is there anything further that you desire to say?

Answer: I would probably have a great deal to say if I knew what other people have said.

Question: I have briefly called your attention to the points upon which I have heard criticisms. Are you heartily sustained by your corps commanders under all circumstances, so far as you believe?

Answer: I believe I have been; I have no complaint to make of want of assistance from all my corps commanders, except what is stated in my evidence in reference to Mine run.

The witness then said:

The following is the rough draught of the original preliminary order before the battle of Gettysburg. The whole gist of the thing is contained in the first part of it.

[General Meade subsequently appeared before the committee and withdrew this rough draught of the preliminary order, and substituted in place of it a series of orders, &c., which will be found at the close of his testimony.]

March 11, 1864.

Major General George G. Meade appeared before the committee and said:

I desire to substitute, in lieu of the rough draught of the preliminary

order which I left here when I gave my testimony, a series of orders and circulars issued by me on the 30th of June and the 1st of July, a careful perusal of which, I am sure, will satisfy every member of this committee that there was no intention on my part to withdraw my army from the position at Gettysburg the very moment that I ascertained that the enemy were there in force, that the ground was favorable for a battle, and that I could fight one there. I will not read all of these orders—only enough to substantiate the point I have here made.

The papers herewith submitted, marked A, B, and C, are the orders issued on the 30th of June, together with the information from General Buford, in command of the cavalry. The information from General Buford, C, was not received, however, until pretty late on the morning of the 1st of July. Letter D contains the orders for the movement of troops on July 1, under which two corps were moved up to Gettysburg. Letter E is the circular, of which I left a rough draught when here before, issued to corps commanders on the morning of July 1, before the information from General Buford had been received, and before I had any positive information that the enemy were moving on the Cashtown road. To show that this circular did not contemplate, under all circumstances or emergencies, a withdrawal or retreat of the army, I would call the attention of the committee to the paper marked F, which are the instructions issued to the commanding officer of the 1st corps, Major General Reynolds, who was ordered up to Gettysburg. These instructions were sent to him about the time that the circular marked E was sent to him. The paper marked F I will now read.—(See appendix to this deposition.)

I desire to say, in connexion with this despatch, that at the time I wrote it I simply knew of the concentration of the enemy, without having any accurate knowledge of the point at which he would strike; and it would be evident to any one perusing it, it having been sent simultaneously with the circular, that I was calling upon my corps commanders to give me information which would justify me in fighting at Emmettsburg, Gettysburg, or any other point where the enemy might suitably be met.

The next despatch I propose to read was a despatch to the commanding officer of the 6th corps, who was to my right and rear, at Manchester. Between the despatch marked F, just read, and the one I now propose to read, marked G, I had received a despatch from General Buford which indicated a strong concentration of the enemy at Gettysburg. Hence this order to the commander of the 6th corps, the most remote from me, to move up to Gettysburg, should such be decided upon as the most commanding position to be adopted. [The paper marked G was then read.] This despatch was to notify General Sedgwick that there was every probability that a battle might be fought at Gettysburg, and that he should hold his corps in readiness to move up there; and that it was also within contingencies that General Reynolds might find himself in the presence of a superior force, and might be compelled to fall back, in which case it would be essential that the line should be concentrated on his rear, and in that event the circular order should be enforced.

About 1 o'clock on the 1st of July I received the sad intelligence of the fall of General Reynolds and the actual engagement of my troops at Gettysburg. Previous to receiving this intelligence I had had a long conversation with Major General Hancock, and explained to him fully my views as to my determination to fight in front if practicable; if not, then to the rear, or to the right or the left, as circumstances might require. Without any further reflection than the fact that General Reynolds was the officer upon whom I had relied under my instructions, and anxious to have some one in front who understood and could carry out my views, I directed General Hancock to proceed to Gettysburg and take command of the troops there, and particularly to advise me of the condition of affairs there, and the practicability of fighting a battle there. The paper marked H contains my instructions to General Hancock. [The paper was then read.] General Hancock immediately proceeded upon this duty. But from information received from the field, from officers returning, I became satisfied that the enemy were in such force there that it was evident that General Lee was about to concentrate his army there. I therefore did not wait for the report from General Hancock, as I can prove from staff officers who took my orders, but immediately commenced to move my troops to the front, being determined to fight a battle there. I will, however, read General Hancock's first report, marked K, and dated 5.25, from Gettysburg, and received by me, I should suppose, about 7 o'clock. [The paper was then read.] As I have already stated, before this despatch was received I ordered up the troops immediately in my neighborhood, the 12th and 5th corps, to the scene of action. Afterwards I sent written instructions to both the 6th and 5th corps to move up. The instructions to the 6th corps, marked M, I will read. [The paper was then read.]

I trust that a careful perusal of these orders, with the explanations I have made here as to the time at which they were written or received, will satisfy the committee that my only doubt about fighting at Gettysburg was caused by, first, the unknown position of the enemy; and secondly, the character of the ground. That the moment those points were made clear to my mind, there was no hesitation on my part to order my troops up there and fight the battle out at that place.

I will call the attention of the committee to another despatch received by me from General Buford, marked I, and dated 20 minutes past 3 o'clock, and which must have been received by me after General Hancock had gone to the front. I read it to show that my sending General Hancock there was in a measure justified by the opinion of that distinguished officer, General Buford, now deceased. [Paper marked I was then read.]

That is all I have to say about the report which has been prevalent in the public press, that the battle at Gettysburg was never intended by me to have been fought there, and that if my plans had been carried out as I intended them to be carried out the battle would not have been fought out there. In connexion with these papers I have appended a map, which will show the position of the army and the line proposed to be taken, and its reference to these different points.

There are two other points upon which I would like to speak.

The Chairman: Certainly; I desire you to state whatever you may think necessary or proper—anything you may desire to state.

Answer: I have understood that an idea has prevailed that I intended an order should be issued on the morning of the 2d of July requiring the withdrawal of the army or the retreat of the army from Gettysburg, which order was not issued, owing simply to the attack of the enemy having prevented it.

In reply to that, I have only to say that I have no recollection of ever having directed such an order to be issued, or ever having contemplated the issuing of such an order; and that it does seem to me that to any intelligent mind who is made acquainted with the great exertions I made to mass my army at Gettysburg on the night of July 1st, it must appear entirely incomprehensible that I should order it to retreat, after collecting all my army there, before the enemy had done anything to require me to make a movement of any kind.

On the morning of the 2d of July I directed an order to be issued to Major General Slocum, commanding the 12th corps, and at that time commanding the 5th corps also, to examine the ground in front of his position, and to hold himself in readiness to make an assault upon the enemy's line so soon as the 6th corps, then on their way, should arrive on the ground. Whether that order was issued verbally or in writing I cannot say; I think it must have been a verbal order, because I cannot find any record whatever of it on my books. However, at that time a great many orders and directions were written on little slips of paper, and no copies kept of them. Before the 6th corps arrived, which was late in the afternoon, it having to march thirty-two miles in a night and day, Major General Slocum reported to me that the character of the ground in his front was not favorable to an assault, and the idea of an assault from the right was abandoned by me.

So soon as the 6th corps arrived, the 5th corps was ordered over to the left, as stated in my previous testimony; and I went to the left with the view of ascertaining as far as I could the position of my own troops and the troops of the enemy, and with the intention of ordering an attack from there, if the enemy did not themselves attack. The enemy, however, attacked and were repulsed.

I beg leave to say, in connexion with this subject of attacking or receiving an attack, that I do not hesitate to say that it was my policy and intention to act upon the defensive, and receive the attack of the enemy, if practicable, knowing that the enemy would be compelled either to attack me or to retire from his position; that it was not within his power to wait any length of time in my front and manœuvre, and that the chances of victory on my side were greater if I acted on the defensive than they would be if I assumed the offensive.

Having thus denied any recollection of having issued, or directed to be issued, any order on the morning of the 2d of July for the retreat of my army before any attack from the enemy, I now desire to refer to a consultation of my corps commanders held on that evening, which, it has

occurred to me, may possibly be the groundwork for this report that I had directed an order to retreat.

On the evening of the 2d of July, after the battle of that day had ceased, and darkness had set in, being aware of the very heavy losses of the 1st and 11th corps on the 1st of July, and knowing how severely the 3d corps, the 5th corps, and other portions of the army had suffered in the battle of the 2d of July—in fact, as subsequently ascertained, out of the 24,000 men killed, wounded and missing, which was the amount of my losses and casualties at Gettysburg, over 20,000 of them had been put *hors du combat* before the night of the 2d of July; and taking into consideration the number of stragglers, and weakening of my army from the two days' battle, my ignorance of the condition of the corps, and the moral condition of the troops, caused me to send for my corps commanders to obtain from them the exact condition of affairs in their separate commands, and to consult and advise with them as to what, if anything, should be done on the morrow. The strong attack of the enemy that day upon my left flank, and their persistent efforts to obtain possession of what is called Round Top mountain, induced the supposition that possibly, on the next day, a very persistent attack might be made, or that a movement, upon their part, to my left and rear might be made to occupy the lines of communication I then held with the Taneytown road and the Baltimore pike.

The questions discussed by this council were, first, whether it was necessary for us to assume any different position from what we then held; and secondly, whether, if we continued to maintain the position we then held, our operations the next day should be offensive or defensive. The opinion of the council was unanimous, which agreed fully with my own views, that we should maintain our lines as they were then held, and that we should wait the movements of the enemy and see whether he made any further attack before we assumed the offensive. I felt satisfied that the enemy would attack again, as subsequently proved to be the case, for he made a vigorous assault upon my right flank, which lasted from daylight in the morning until 10 o'clock. He then made one of his heaviest assaults upon my left and left centre, which lasted from one o'clock until six in the evening.

I have been specific in giving the details of this council, because it has occurred to me as possible that some erroneous report of what took place there may have given rise to the idea that I desired to withdraw my army and retreat, and that I called my corps commanders together to know if they were in favor of retreating.

I should like to have the committee, and I trust they will do so, call upon all the principal officers I had upon that field—the corps commanders and division commanders; that their attention should be called to all the points to which I have alluded here; and that they should be specifically questioned as to their recollection and views upon those points.

Question : The council to which you have referred is one held on the evening of the 2d of July?

Answer : Yes, sir.

Question : I believe one of the witnesses we have examined states that a council was held on the night of the 3d of July also. Was there such a council held?

Answer : I do not remember any council held on the night of the 3d of July. I had one on the night of the 4th of July, as to a plan of action in reference to pursuing the enemy. I do not remember any council on the 3d of July; if there was one, it was a council with my corps commanders, and they are all as well able to state what transpired there as myself; but I do not remember calling any council at that time. It is possible there was a consultation. I never called those meetings councils; they were consultations, and they were probably more numerous and more constant in my case, from the fact that I had just assumed command of the army, and felt that it was due to myself to have the opinions of high officers before I took action on matters which involved such momentous issues.

A

(Circular)

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

The commanding general requests that, previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers will address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in the struggle. The enemy are on our soil; the whole country now looks anxiously to this army to deliver it from the presence of the foe; our failure to do so will leave us no such welcome as the swelling of millions of hearts with pride and joy at our success would give to every soldier of this army. Homes, firesides, and domestic altars are involved. The army has fought well heretofore; it is believed that it will fight more desperately and bravely than ever if it is addressed in fitting terms. Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty this hour.

By command of Major General Meade:

S. WILLIAMS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

B

(Circular)

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

The commanding general has received information that the enemy are advancing, probably in strong force, on Gettysburg. It is the inten-

tion to hold this army pretty nearly in the position it now occupies until the plans of the enemy shall have been more fully developed.

Three corps, 1st, 3d, and 11th, are under the command of Major General Reynolds, in the vicinity of Emmettsburg, the 3d corps being ordered up to that point. The 12th corps is at Littlestown. General Gregg's division of cavalry is believed to be now engaged with the cavalry of the enemy near Hanover Junction.

Corps commanders will hold their commands in readiness at a moment's notice, and upon receiving orders to march against the enemy, their trains (ammunition wagons excepted) must be parked in the rear of the place of concentration.

Ammunition wagons and ambulances will alone be permitted to accompany the troops. The men must be provided with three days' rations in haversacks, and with sixty rounds of ammunition in the boxes and upon the person.

Corps commanders will avail themselves of all the time at their disposal to familiarize themselves with the roads communicating with the different corps.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

C

GETTYSBURG, *June 30, 1863—10.30 P. M.*

The reserve brigade, under General Merritt, is at Mechanicstown, with my trains. General Pleasonton wrote he would inform me when he relieved it. To-day I received instructions saying it would picket towards Hagerstown and south.

I am satisfied that A. P. Hill's corps is massed just back of Cashtown, about nine miles from this place. Pender's division of this (Hill's) corps came up to-day, of which I advised you, saying "the enemy in my front was increased." The enemy's pickets (infantry and artillery) are within four miles of this place, at the Cashtown road. My parties have returned that went north, northwest and northeast, after crossing the road from Cashtown to Oxford in several places. They heard nothing of any force having passed over it lately. The road, however, is terribly infested with prowling cavalry parties. Near Heidlersburg, to-day, one of my parties captured a courier of Lee's; nothing was found on him. He says Ewell's corps is crossing the mountains from Carlisle, Roach's division being at Petersburg in advance. Longstreet, from all I can learn, is still behind Hill.

I have many rumors and reports of the enemy advancing upon me from towards York. I have to pay attention to some of them, which

causes me to overwork my horses and men. I can get no forage or rations—am out of both. The people give and sell the men something to eat, but I can't stand that way of subsisting. It causes dreadful straggling. Should I have to fall back, advise me by what route.

Respectfully,

BUFORD.

MAJOR GENERAL REYNOLDS.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, A. A. G.

D

(Orders)

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Headquarters at Taneytown.

Thirds corps to Emmettsburg.

Second corps to Taneytown.

Fifth corps to Hanover.

First corps to Gettysburg.

Eleventh corps to Gettysburg, (or supporting distance.)

Sixth corps to Manchester.

Twelfth corps to Two Taverns.

Cavalry to front, and flank well out in all directions, giving timely notice of operations and movements of the enemy.

All empty wagons, surplus baggage, useless animals, and implements of every sort to Union bridge, three miles from Middleburg; a proper officer from each corps with them. Supplies will be brought up there as soon as practicable. The general relies upon every commander to put his column in the lightest possible order.

The telegraph corps to work east from Hanover, repairing the line, and all commanders to work repairing the line in their vicinity between Gettysburg and Hanover.

Staff officers report daily from each corps, and with orderlies to leave for orders. Prompt information to be sent into headquarters at all times. All ready to move to the attack at any moment.

The commanding general desires you to be informed that from present information Longstreet and Hill are at Chambersburg, partly towards Gettysburg; Ewell at Carlisle and York. Movements indicate a disposition to advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg.

General Couch telegraphs, 29th, his opinion that enemy's operations on Susquehanna are more to prevent co-operation with this army than offensive. The general believes he has relieved Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and now desires to look to his own army, and assume position for offensive or defensive, as occasions require, and give rest to the troops.

It is not his desire to wear the troops out by excessive fatigue and

marches, and thus unfit them for the work they will be called upon to perform.

Vigilance, energy, and prompt response to the orders from headquarters are necessary, and personal attention must be given to reduction impediments. The orders and movements from these headquarters must be carefully and confidentially preserved, that they do not fall into the enemy's hands.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

E

(Circular)

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, TANETOWN, *July 1, 1863.*

From information received the commanding general is satisfied that the object of the movement of the army in this direction has been accomplished, viz: the relief of Harrisburg and the prevention of the enemy's intended invasion of Philadelphia beyond the Susquehanna.

It is no longer his intention to assume the offensive until the enemy's movements or position should render such an operation certain of success. If the enemy assume the offensive and attack, it is his intention, after holding them in check sufficiently long to withdraw the trains and other impediments, to withdraw the army from its present position, and form line of battle with the left resting in the neighborhood of Middleburg, and the right at Manchester, the general direction being that of Pipe creek.

For this purpose General Reynolds, in command of the left, will withdraw the force at present at Gettysburg, two corps by the road to Taneytown and Westminster, and, after crossing Pipe creek, deploy towards Middleburg. The corps at Emmettsburg will be withdrawn, by way of Mechanicsville, to Middleburg, or, if a more direct route can be found, leaving Taneytown to their left, to withdraw direct to Middleburg.

General Slocum will assume command of the two corps at Hanover and Two Taverns and withdraw them via Union Mills, deploying one to the right and one to the left after crossing Pipe creek, connecting on the left with General Reynolds, and communicating his right to General Sedgwick at Manchester, who will connect with him and form the right.

The time for falling back can only be developed by circumstances. Whenever such circumstances arise as would seem to indicate the necessity for falling back and assuming this general line indicated, notice of such movement will at once be communicated to these headquarters and to all adjoining corps commanders.

The 2d corps, now at Taneytown, will be held in reserve, in the vicinity of Uniontown and Frizelburg, to be thrown to the point of strongest attack, should the enemy make it. In the event of these movements being necessary, the trains and impedimenta will all be sent to the rear at Westminster.

Corps commanders, with their officers commanding artillery, and the divisions, should make themselves thoroughly familiar with the country indicated, all the roads and positions, so that no possible confusion can ensue, and that the movement, if made, be done with good order, precision, and care, without loss, or any detriment to the morale of the troops.

The commanders of corps are requested to communicate at once the nature of their present position, and their ability to hold them in case of any sudden attack at any point by the enemy.

This order is communicated that a general plan, perfectly understood by all, may be had for receiving attack if made in strong force upon any portion of our present position. Developments may cause the commanding general to assume the offensive from his present positions.

The artillery reserve will, in the event of the general movement indicated, move to the rear of Frizelburg, and be placed in position, or sent to corps, as circumstances may require, under the general supervision of the chief of artillery.

The chief quartermaster will, in case of the general movement indicated, give directions for the orderly and proper position of the trains in rear of Westminster. All the trains will keep well to the right of the road in moving, and in case of any accident, requiring a halt, the team must be hauled out of the line, and not delay the movements.

The trains ordered to Union Bridge, in these events will be sent to Westminster. General headquarters will be, in case of this movement, at Frizelburg.

General Slocum as near Union Mills as the line will render best for him.

General Reynolds at or near the road from Taneytown to Frizelburg.

The chief of artillery will examine the line and select positions for artillery. The cavalry will be held on the right and left flanks after the movement is completed; previous to its completion, he will, as now directed, cover the front and exterior lines well out.

The commands must be prepared for a movement, and, in the event of the enemy attacking us on the ground indicated herein, to follow up any repulse.

The chief signal officer will examine the line thoroughly and at once. Upon the commencement of this movement, extend telegraphic communications from each of the following points to general headquarters, near Frizelburg, viz: Manchester, Union Mills, Middleburg, and the Taneytown road.

All true Union people should be advised to harass and annoy the enemy in every way; to send in information, and taught how to do it—giving regiments by number of colors, number of guns, generals' names,

&c.; all their supplies brought to us will be paid for, and not fall into the enemy's hands.

Roads and ways to move to the right and left of general line should be studied and thoroughly understood. All movements of troops should be concealed, and our dispositions kept from the enemy. Their knowledge of these dispositions would be fatal to our success, and the greatest care must be taken to prevent such an occurrence.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

F

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, *1st Corps:*

The telegraphic intelligence received from General Couch, with the various movements reported from Buford, seem to indicate the concentration of the enemy either at Chambersburg, or at a point situated somewhere on a line drawn between Chambersburg and York, through Heidlersburg, and to the north of Gettysburg.

The commanding general cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to attack, until he learns something more definite of the point at which the enemy is concentrating. This he hopes to do during the day. Meanwhile he would like to have your views upon the subject, at least so far as concerns your position.

If the enemy is concentrated to the right of Gettysburg, that point would not, at first glance, seem to be a proper strategic point of concentration for this army. If the enemy is concentrating in front of Gettysburg, or to the left of it, the general is not sufficiently well informed of the nature of the country to judge of its character either for an offensive or defensive position. The number of the enemy are estimated at about 92,000 infantry, with 270 pieces of artillery, and his cavalry from six to eight thousand. Our numbers ought to equal it, and with the arrival of General French's command, which should get up to-morrow, exceed it, if not too much weakened by straggling and fatigue.

The general having just assumed command in obedience to orders, with the position of affairs leaving no time to learn the condition of the army as to morale and proportionate strength compared with its last return, would gladly receive from you any suggestions as to the points laid down in this note. He feels that you know more of the condition of the troops in your vicinity and the country than he does.

General Humphreys, who is at Emmettsburg with the 3d corps, the general considers an excellent adviser as to the nature of the country for defensive or offensive operations. If near enough to call him to con-

sultation with you, please do so, without interference with the responsibilities that devolve upon you both. You have all the information which the general has received, and the general would like to have your views.

The movement of your corps to Gettysburg was ordered before the positive knowledge of the enemy's withdrawal from Harrisburg and concentration was received.

S. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

G

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, *6th Corps:*

I am directed by the commanding general to state that it would appear from reports just received that the enemy is moving in heavy force on Gettysburg, (Ewell from Heidlersburg, and Hill from Cashtown Pass,) and it is not improbable he will reach that place before the command under Major General Reynolds, (the 1st and 11th corps,) now on the way, can arrive there. Should such be the case, and General Reynolds finds himself in the presence of a superior force, he is instructed to hold the enemy in check, and fall slowly back. If he is able to do this, the line indicated in the circular of to-day will be occupied to-night. Should circumstances render it necessary for the commanding general to fight the enemy to-day, the troops are posted as follows for the support of Reynolds's command, viz: On his right at "Two Taverns," the 12th corps; at Hanover, the 5th corps; the 2d corps is on the road between Taneytown and Gettysburg; the 3d corps is at Emmettsburg.

This information is conveyed to you that you may have your corps in readiness to move in such direction as may be required at a moment's notice.

S. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

H

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863—1.10 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, *2d Corps:*

The major general commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed, or badly wounded. He directs that you turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon; that you proceed to the front, and by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General

Reynolds's death, you assume command of the corps there assembled, viz: the 11th, 1st, and 3d, at Emmetsburg. If you think the ground and position there a (better) suitable one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, you will so advise the general, and he will order all the troops up. You know the general's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

Later—1.15 P. M.

Reynolds has possession of Gettysburg, and the enemy are reported as falling back from the front of Gettysburg. Hold your column ready to move.

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,
Major General, Chief of Staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

I

HEADQUARTERS FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION,
July 1, 1863—20 minutes past 3.

GENERAL PLEASANTON: I am satisfied that Longstreet and Hill have made a junction. A tremendous battle has been raging since 9½ A. M., with varying success. At the present moment the battle is raging on the road to Cashtown, and in short cannon range of this town; the enemy's line is a semicircle on the height from north to west. General Reynolds was killed early this morning. In my opinion there seems to be no directing person.

JOHN BUFORD,
Brigadier General of Volunteers.

We need help now.

BUFORD.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

K

5.25

GENERAL: When I arrived here an hour since, I found that our troops had given up the front at Gettysburg and the town. We have now taken up a position in the cemetery, and cannot well be taken; it is a position, however, easily turned. Slocum is now coming on the ground, and is taking position on the right, which will protect the right. But we have as yet no troops on the left, the third corps not having yet reported, but I suppose that it is marching up. If so, his flank march will in a degree protect our left flank. In the mean time Gibbon had better march on so as to take position on our right or left to our rear, as

may be necessary, in some commanding position. General G. will see this despatch. The battle is quiet now. I think we will be all right until night. I have sent all the trains back. When night comes it can be told better what had best be done. I think we can retire; if not we can fight here, as the ground appears not unfavorable with good troops. I will communicate in a few moments with General Slocum, and transfer the command to him.

Howard says that Doubleday's command gave way.

Your obedient servant,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,

Major General Commanding Corps.

General Warten is here.

GENERAL BUTTERFIELD, *Chief of Staff.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

L

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863—7 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, *5th Corps :*

The major general commanding directs that you move up to Gettysburg at once upon receipt of this order, if not already ordered to do so by General Slocum. The present prospect is that our general engagement must be there. Communicate with General Slocum, under whose directions you are placed by the orders of this morning. The general had supposed that General Slocum would have ordered you up.

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

Major General, Chief of Staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 9, 1864.*

Official copy:

CHARLES E. PEASE, *A. A. G.*

M

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

TANNETTOWN, *July 1, 1863—7½ P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, *6th Corps :*

The major general commanding directs me to say that a general battle seems to be impending to-morrow at Gettysburg. That it is of the utmost importance that your command should be up. He directs that you stop all trains, or turn them out of the road that impede your progress. Your march will have to be a forced one to reach the scene of action, where we shall probably be largely out-numbered without your presence. If any shorter road presents itself without difficulty in getting up, you will use your discretion in taking it, and report the facts to these headquarters.

General Sykes has been ordered up from Hanover to Gettysburg, and General Slocum from Littletown, and General Hancock's corps from here. The whole army is there, (Gettysburg,) or under way for that point. The general desires you to report here in person without delay the moment you receive this. He is waiting to see you here before going to the front. The trains will all go to Westminster and Union Bridge, as ordered.

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,
Major General, Chief of Staff.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, March 9, 1864.

Official copy:

CHAS. E. PEASE, A. A. G.

WASHINGTON, April 4, 1864.

Major General George G. Meade appeared before the committee and said: I desire to add a little to my testimony, with the permission of the committee.

The Chairman: Certainly, you are at liberty to make such additional statements as you please.

The Witness: I wanted to say a few words to the committee, in extension of the remarks which I made the last time I was here, in reference to a charge which I expected then would be made against me, to the effect that I intended that an order should be issued, on the morning of July 2, withdrawing the army from the position it then occupied at Gettysburg and retreating, before the enemy had done anything to require me to withdraw.

It is proper that I should say that the fact of such a charge having been made here, or such a report given here, has reached me through outside sources, but in such a way that I can hardly disbelieve that such a statement has been made; and that it was made by an officer who occupied a very high and confidential position on my staff—the chief-of-staff, Major-General Butterfield. Now, indulging in the utmost charity towards General Butterfield, and believing that he is sincere in what he says, I want to explain how it is possible that such an extraordinary idea could have got into his head.

I utterly deny, under the full solemnity and sanctity of my oath, and in the firm conviction that the day will come when the secrets of men shall be made known—I utterly deny ever having intended or thought, for one instant, to withdraw that army unless the military contingencies which the future should develop during the course of the day might render it a matter of necessity that the army should be withdrawn. I base this denial not only upon my own assertion and my own veracity, but I shall also show to the committee, from documentary evidence, the dispatches and orders issued by me at different periods during that day, that if I did intend any such operation, I was at the same time doing things totally inconsistent with any such intention.

I shall also ask the committee to call before them certain other officers of my staff, whose positions were as near and confidential to me as that

of General Butterfield, who, if I had any such intention, or had given any such orders as he said I gave, would have been parties to it, would have known it, and have made arrangements in consequence thereof; all of whom, I am perfectly confident, will say they never heard of any such thing. I refer to General Hunt, chief of artillery, and who had artillery, occupying a space from four to five miles, drawn out on the road, and who, if I had intended to have withdrawn that army, should have been told to get his trains out of the way the very first thing, because the troops could not move until the artillery moved. I would also ask you to call upon General Ingalls, my chief quartermaster, who had charge of the trains; also General Warren, my chief engineer, who will tell you that he was with me the whole of that day, in constant intercourse and communication with me; and that, instead of intending to withdraw my army, I was talking about other matters. All these officers will corroborate what I say, that I never mentioned any such purpose to any of them.

General Butterfield remained at Taneytown on the night of the 1st of July, and did not join me on the field until about 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning of the 2d, I having arrived there at 1 o'clock. Soon after he arrived I did direct him to familiarize himself with the topography of the ground, and I directed him to send out staff officers to learn all the roads. As I have already mentioned in my previous testimony here, I had never before been at Gettysburg, and did not know how many roads ran from our position, or what directions they ran. My orders to General Butterfield were similar to this:

"General Butterfield, neither I nor any man can tell what the results of this day's operations may be. It is our duty to be prepared for every contingency, and I wish you to send out staff officers to learn all the roads that lead from this place, ascertain the positions of the corps—where their trains are; prepare to familiarize yourself with these details, so that in the event of any contingency, you can, without any order, be ready to meet it."

It was in anticipation of possible contingencies, and not at all that I had made up my mind to do anything of that kind.

I would furthermore call the attention of the committee to the absurdity of such an idea. If I had directed the order to be issued, why was it not issued? With General Butterfield's capacity it would not have taken him more than ten or fifteen minutes to prepare such an order. We were furnished with what you call manifold letter-writers, so that after the framework of an order is prepared, ten or a dozen copies may be made at once. Why was the order not issued, or if issued, why was it not executed? There was no obstacle to my withdrawing that army, if I had desired; the enemy presented none. There was not a moment, from the time the first gun was fired at Gettysburg until we knew the enemy had retired, that I could not have withdrawn my army. Therefore, if I had entertained such an idea, it seems to me extraordinary that I did not execute it.

I will now read the documentary evidence that I propose to lay before

this committee. The first is a despatch to Major-General Slocum, commanding the 12th corps, as follows:

"July 2, 1863—9.30 A. M.

"GENERAL: The Commanding general desires that you will at once examine the ground in your front, and give him your opinion as to the practicability of attacking the enemy in that quarter.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"S. WILLIAMS,

"Assistant Adjutant General.

"MAJOR GENERAL H. W. SLOCUM, Commanding."

Then there is a despatch at 10 A. M. addressed to General Slocum, written by General Butterfield himself, directing him to make an attack:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC,

"July 2, 1863, (supposed about 10 A. M.)

"MAJOR GENERAL SLOCUM:

The commanding general desires you to make your arrangements for an attack from your front on the enemy, to be made by the 12th corps, supported by the 5th.

"He wishes this a strong and decisive attack, which he will order so soon as he gets definite information of the approach of the 6th corps, which will also be directed to co-operate in this attack; for this purpose he has sent an officer to ascertain the whereabouts of General Sedgwick, and report.

"I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

"Major-General and Chief of Staff."

At 10 o'clock I was ordering General Slocum to make the attack; at the same time I sent General Warren, my chief engineer, to consult with General Slocum as to the advisability of making the attack. General Warren went, and then returned and reported to me. I also received the following note from General Slocum:

"HEADQUARTERS, July 2, 1863—10.30 A. M.

"MAJOR GENERAL MEADE,

"Commanding Army of Potomac.

"GENERAL: Your note of 9.30 A. M. is received. I have already made a better examination of the position in my front than I was able to do, now that we have taken up a new line. If it is true that the enemy are massing troops on our right, I do not think we could detach enough troops for an attack to insure success. I do not think the ground in my front, held by the enemy, possesses any peculiar advantages for him.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"H. W. SLOCUM,

"Major General Commanding."

General Warren, furthermore, reported to me that he did not think an attack advisable from our right flank; I therefore abandoned that attack, and waited for the 6th corps to arrive, intending to move the 5th corps over to the left, as I did, and then, if the enemy did not attack me, to make an attack myself from the left.

I find on the records of the Adjutant General's office of the Army of the Potomac a document, supposed to have been issued at ten o'clock A. M. of the 2d of July, which is in confirmation of what I consider my orders to General Butterfield. It is as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC,

"July 2 (supposed about 10 A. M.), 1863.

"The staff officers on duty at headquarters will inform themselves of the positions of the various corps—their artillery, infantry and trains—sketch them with a view to roads, and report them immediately, as follows:

"3d corps, Colonel Schriver.

"2d corps, Lieutenant Colonel Davis.

"1st corps, Lieutenant Perkins.

"12th corps, Lieutenant Oliver.

"5th corps, Captain Cadwalader.

"It is desired to know the roads on or near which the troops are, and where their trains lie, in view of movements in any direction, and to be familiar with the headquarters of the commanders.

"By order of General Meade.

"S. WILLIAMS,

"Assistant Adjutant General."

That was the sum and substance of the instructions I gave to General Butterfield, to familiarize himself with the position, and be ready, in case I should desire to retreat or do anything else, to issue the necessary orders.

In further confirmation of that, I find among my papers my despatch to General Halleck, informing him of what had transpired up to the hour at which it was written, and what I proposed to do during the rest of the day, if in my power to do so. The despatch to General Slocum to make the attack was at 10 A. M. This despatch to General Halleck was at 3 P. M., and is as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC,

"July 2 (3 P. M. NEAR GETTYSBURG), 1863.

"MAJOR GENERAL HALLECK, Washington:

"I have concentrated my army at this place to-day. The 6th corps is just coming in very much worn out, having been marching since 9 P. M. last night. The army is fatigued.

"I have to-day, up to this hour, awaited the attack of the enemy, I having a strong position for defence. I am not determined as yet in attacking him till his position is more developed. He has been moving on

both my flanks apparently, but it is difficult to tell exactly his movements. I have delayed attacking to allow the 6th corps and parts of other corps to reach this place and to rest the men. Expecting a battle, I ordered all my trains to the rear. If not attacked, and I can get any positive information of the position of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to move to my rear, and interpose between me and Washington, I shall fall back to my supplies at Westminster. I will endeavor to advise you as often as possible.

"In the engagement yesterday the enemy concentrated more rapidly than we could, and towards evening, owing to the superiority of numbers, compelled the 11th and 1st corps to fall back from the town to the heights on this side, on which I am now posted.

"I feel fully the responsibility resting on me, and will endeavor to act with caution.

"GEORGE G. MEADE,
"Major General."

The committee will perceive that I tell General Halleck that I was waiting the arrival of the 6th corps before I should commence any active operations myself; that I had been expecting an attack up to that moment; that, after the 6th corps arrived, if the enemy did not attack me I should attack him if I thought it advisable to do so.

There is no doubt, as I mentioned here before, and as I have no hesitation to say again now, whatever influence it may have upon my reputation as a general, that it was my desire at Gettysburg to receive the attack of the enemy, and fight a defensive rather than an offensive battle, for the reason that I was satisfied my chances of success were greater in a defensive battle than an offensive one, and I knew the momentous consequences dependent upon the result of that.

That General Butterfield may have misapprehended what I said to him; that he may himself have deemed a retreat necessary, and thought we would be compelled to retreat in the course of the day, and in the excess of zeal and desire to do more than he was called upon to do, may have drawn up an order of that kind, I do not deny; but I say he never showed me any such order, and it had not my sanction or authority.

I have only further to say that I have brought with me a map of the field of Gettysburg. I consider the map accurate. It contains on it, in blue lines, the position which General Sickles thought proper to take, and, in red lines, the position I designed him to occupy.

APPENDIX X

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, ATTACK ON GENERAL MEADE;
SEE PAGE 186, VOL. II

(For reply by Col. Meade, see Appendix Y)

(From the *New York Times*, April 1st, 1883)

MEADE AT GETTYSBURG

HIS PROPOSED RETREAT ON THE NIGHT OF THE 2ND OF JULY

GEN. DOUBLEDAY'S DEFENSE OF HIS STATEMENT THAT MEADE WAS OVERRULED BY THE ACTION OF A COUNCIL OF WAR

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *NEW YORK Times*:

A short time since a quotation was given in the *Times* from the Appendix to Swinton's "History of the Army of the Potomac" to the effect that there is not "a scintilla of evidence" to sustain my statement that Gen. Meade contemplated a retreat at Gettysburg. As this is calculated to discredit the account of the battle given in my work on Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, I hope you will allow me a few words by way of reply. I would have answered it in the second edition of my book, but unfortunately, that was already in print before I saw the article which reflects so severely on my fairness and generosity.

Mr. Swinton takes the ground that it is an attack on Gen. Meade's reputation to assert that he ever thought of falling back. I am aware that it may seem ungracious to speak thus of Gen. Meade's intentions. As he did remain and fight it out, he is entitled to the credit of doing so. I, therefore, would not have mentioned the subject at all if it had not been for a circumstance that has escaped Mr. Swinton's notice. The desire to retreat was supplemented by *acts which form part of the history of the battle*. He sent for Gen. Pleasonton on the 2nd of July, his Chief of Cavalry, and directed him, late in the afternoon, to *collect what cavalry and artillery he could, proceed with it to the rear, and take up a position to cover the retreat of the army*. As a faithful historian, if I refer to Gen. Pleasonton's movements at all, I must state the origin of it.

Mr. Swinton forgets that the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War reported that there was evidence that Gen. Meade desired to retreat.

On the evening of the 2nd, after sending Pleasonton off, Gen. Meade called a council of war and put the question to the corps commanders whether they were in favor of remaining on the ridge or retreating. Our losses had been heavy and the enemy were then attacking our right, which was denuded of troops. Nevertheless, the council voted to remain and endeavor to hold the ridge. Gen. Meade dissented from the conclusion and expressed his strong dissatisfaction. Mr. Swinton and others deny this. They seem to assume that such action on his part must needs denote timidity or bad generalship. It does not necessarily indicate anything of the kind. As the right of the enemy overlapped

the left of our line for a considerable distance, it is said that Longstreet was in favor of turning that flank. This would not only force the Union army from the ridge, but would enable Lee to intervene between Meade and Washington. Meade feared that this would be done. He was, doubtless, apprehensive that Lee would steal a march on him in the night and thus endanger the safety of the capital. I do not suppose that Mr. Swinton in his zeal to defend Gen. Meade will assume that Pleasonton's movement is a myth. The statement is sworn to before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, but as it is in a different volume from the mass of the testimony it has probably escaped Mr. Swinton's notice. The following letter from Gen. Pleasonton reiterates the statement:

WILLARD'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON CITY, Feb. 8, 1883.

GENERAL: Your note of the 6th inst. is received. In answer to your question I have to state that Gen. Meade, on the 2nd of July, 1863, at Gettysburg, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, gave me the order to get what cavalry and artillery I could, as soon as possible, and take up a position in rear to cover the retreat of the army from Gettysburg. I was thus occupied until 10 o'clock at night, when I was recalled by an order from Gen. Meade.

This absence accounted for my not being at the council of war held at Meade's head-quarters early in the evening.

* * * * *

Yours very truly,

A. PLEASONTON.

TO GEN. A. DOUBLEDAY.

By way of rebuttal, Mr. Swinton parades the following declaration of Gen. Meade. A very slight examination will show *that it refers to a different period of the battle: to the morning of the 2nd, and not to the evening.* Gen. Meade says:

"I utterly deny, under the full solemnity and sanctity of my oath, and in the firm conviction that the day will come when the secrets of all men shall be made known—I utterly deny having intended or thought for one instant to withdraw that army, *unless the military contingencies which the future should develop during the course of the day might render it a matter of necessity that the army should be withdrawn.*"

The italics are mine.

I will now give the reason for this emphatic declaration on the part of Gen. Meade. On the morning of the 2nd he directed his Chief of Staff, Gen. Butterfield, to study and mark out the lines of retreat. It was subsequently asserted that this was a positive order for the army—which had just formed on the ridge—to withdraw before the enemy assailed it. Gen. Meade denies that it was anything of the kind: it was merely a necessary precaution to avoid confusion in case he lost the position and was driven back.

I did not make the statement that he intended to retreat *at that time* nor did I refer to his desire to do so in the *evening* of the 2nd in either a carping or accusing spirit. I am astonished that it should be criticised

so harshly. Mr. Swinton states that the only foundation which I have for asserting it is the evidence of Gen. Butterfield before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. He then assumes that Gen. Butterfield had a grievance: that he had been displaced as Chief of Staff to Gen. Meade, and had made up this story to injure the latter. Gen. Butterfield is fully capable of taking care of his own reputation. As, however, he is absent in South America, I will state for the information of non-military readers that the office of Chief of Staff is not a permanent one. Whoever fills it must necessarily hold the most intimate and confidential relations to the commander of the army. Hence, a personal friend is always selected for the position. Gen. Butterfield, who had been chosen for this duty by Gen. Hooker, never for a moment supposed that he would be retained in the same capacity by Gen. Meade, and, therefore, offered his resignation at once. It was not accepted until the battle was over. It is as absurd to suppose that he cherished animosity on this account as it would be to imagine that an ex-Secretary of State would become bitterly hostile to a new Administration because he was not continued in office.

Mr. Swinton says that Butterfield's evidence is not confirmed by any other member of the council of war. The fact is, they were not questioned as to the specific language quoted by Gen. Butterfield, and no subordinate will volunteer information which may seem to reflect on his superiors. Facts of this kind are usually drawn out in cross-examination.

Gen. Slocum, who commanded the right wing of the army at Gettysburg, ought to be pretty good authority as to what occurred at the council. The following letter sustains Gen. Butterfield's statement in its essential particulars:

NO. 465 CLINTON AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

February 19, 1883.

DEAR GENERAL: Your favor of the 14th inst. has been received. I have not read what Swinton says in his new edition of "The Army of the Potomac," and having thus far avoided being drawn into any of the controversies about the events of the war, I feel averse to writing anything on the subject.

That a council of war was called by Gen. Meade on the evening of July 2d is well known. The names of all present are well known. The question submitted was: "Is it advisable for the army to remain in its present position or to fall back?" The opinion of each corps commander was asked, commencing with the junior in rank. A majority were of the opinion that we should remain in the position then held by us. When each officer had expressed his views, Gen. Meade said: "Well, gentlemen, the question is settled. We will remain here, but I wish to say that I consider this no place to fight a battle." I do not believe any officer who was present at this important meeting has forgotten Gen. Meade's words.

Yours truly,

H. W. SLOCUM.

GEN. A. DOUBLEDAY.

The statement of Gen. Meade's views does by no means rest solely upon the testimony quoted above. There is additional evidence to the same effect which I might give, but that several witnesses are averse to coming to the front and being pelted with partisan mud. I have no hesitation, however, to affirm that Gen. Birney, as he rode home from the council that night with his staff officer, Major J. B. Fassitt, commented upon Gen. Meade's statement that Gettysburg was no place to fight in. He subsequently made the same remark to Gen. Sickles when the latter was convalescing from his wound. Both Major Fassitt and Gen. Sickles reside in New York.

Mr. Swinton assumes that I am unable to write an impartial history owing to the hostile relations which he supposes to have existed between Gen. Meade and myself, founded on my criticism of the latter in my testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. I freely admit that I was unnecessarily harsh in my language at that time. The fact is, that just before the battle of Gettysburg I was applied to by an officer of high rank, a confidential friend of Gen. Meade, to give him a list of such officers of my division as had made strong demonstrations when Gen. McClellan was removed from command. The object of the inquiry was to promote these men over the heads of others equally deserving. I looked upon this as a plot to change the army of the Union into a partisan force, which was to become the personal appanage of an individual. Believing Gen. Meade to be a party to this arrangement, I thought he intended to carry out this policy, and testified accordingly. I afterward ascertained that I was mistaken in this respect; that he had no intention of reorganizing the army in the interest of Gen. McClellan. Indeed, he could not have done so, without displacing himself. When I understood the circumstances I did not blame him for his action toward me at Gettysburg. Nor is it true that he was not willing that I should serve under him again. Indeed, I applied to go down to the army to resume command of a division, and I never would have done so if I had not been certain that I would be welcome. Gen. Meade frequently made friendly inquiries concerning me of a relative who was there. I also received a message which came through Lieut. Lambdin, formerly of my staff, to the effect that I would be well received by him in case I returned to the army. The War Department refused my application to go, on the ground that my services could not be spared from Washington at that time.

Mr. Swinton's rose-colored narrative of the war might appropriately be called the "History of the Army of Northern Virginia."

ABNER DOUBLEDAY,

Brevet Major-General United States Army.

MENDHAM, N. J.

APPENDIX Y

PAMPHLET PUBLISHED BY COLONEL MEADE IN REPLY TO GENERAL DOUBLEDAY'S LETTER IN THE NEW YORK *TIMES* OF APRIL 1, 1883. SEE LETTER OF APRIL 2, 1864, PAGE 186, VOL. II
(For General Doubleday's letter see Appendix X)

DID GENERAL MEADE DESIRE TO RETREAT AT THE
BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG?

BY GEORGE MEADE,

FORMERLY CAPTAIN AND AIDE-DE-CAMP AND BREVET LIEUT.-COL. U. S. ARMY

(Philadelphia: Porter & Coates. 1883)

I did not see or hear of the letter of General Abner Doubleday, published in the *New York Times* of April 1st, until my attention was called to it nearly a month afterward. But, in view of the fact of my previous silence, when General Doubleday has discussed the same topic, that does not account for my noticing it now or at all. I begin, therefore, with an apology for breaking that long silence, induced by the conviction that he had manifestly to the world failed to substantiate the assertions made in his history of the battle of Gettysburg. I have been actuated, heretofore, by the belief that "no man was ever written out of reputation but by himself," and the belief that I might safely commit that task to General Doubleday. But there comes a time when, in the individual case, it becomes a debatable question whether this view may not be pushed too far, when for instance, as at present, the living, as being alive, has to that extent a signal advantage over the dead. This I hold to be a good and sufficient reason for breaking a silence which has been maintained in deference to a general belief among friends, in which I no longer share, that it was simply not worth while to take notice of these attacks. They shall no longer have the benefit of the doubt of being harmless. If they be not harmless, it were well worth while to prove them groundless, which I proceed to do from undisputed facts, and from the enormously preponderating weight of testimony against them.

That the reader may have a clear idea of the question at issue, it is well to premise that it is asserted by a little clique of dissatisfied spirits, who find in General Doubleday a convenient and willing instrument, that General Meade desired and intended to retreat from the field of Gettysburg throughout nearly the whole of the 2d of July, 1863. It has been attempted to prove this in various ways, in face of General Meade's well-known conduct on that day, of his official orders and despatches, and of his solemn protestation to the contrary before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, in 1864, where the charge of his having intended to retreat was first distinctly formulated. Although those engaged in maintaining this charge have devoted to it nearly twenty years, although dur-

ing that time they had the moral support of the controlling element of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, free access to all the records of the War Department, and ample opportunity to confer with all the officers of the Army of the Potomac who had been present at the battle of Gettysburg; and, during the last ten years, have had the decided advantage that he whose reputation is assailed has lain dead in his grave, yet, as Mr. Swinton says, in his "Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac," when referring to the late work of General Doubleday, he "does not produce one scintilla of testimony in support of his accusation," to refute which assertion is the ostensible motive of General Doubleday's late letter.

In order to show how utterly inconsistent all General Meade's actions were with any such intention as that ascribed to him by General Doubleday, it is necessary to take a retrospective view of what occurred just previous to the time specified by General Doubleday.

On the evening of July 1, 1863, General Meade was at Taneytown, distant from Gettysburg about thirteen miles. He had made every exertion to hasten the troops to the front, and was preparing to go to Gettysburg in person, when General Hancock, just returned from the front, reported to him. That officer's report as to the advantages of the ground for fighting a battle there, and as to the dispositions that had been made, confirmed him in his intention of fighting there, and determined him upon proceeding at once to that place. He sent out additional orders, urging the rapid advance of the corps which had not yet reached Gettysburg, and soon afterward started for the front, arriving at the Cemetery about 1 A. M., July 2, stopping for a few moments only on the way, to order General Gibbon, temporarily commanding the Second Corps, to move forward as soon as it was daylight. After a conference with General Howard and other officers, as soon as objects could be distinguished, General Meade made a personal inspection of the lines. He fully approved of the position as selected, and issued his orders for the posting of the various corps as soon as they should arrive upon the field. At 9.30 A. M., the Fifth Corps having in the mean time arrived and been posted on the right of the Twelfth Corps, General Meade sent a despatch to General Slocum to examine at once the ground in his front with reference to the practicability of attacking the enemy in that quarter. At 10 A. M. this was followed by an order to General Slocum to make arrangements for an attack from his front with his own and the Fifth Corps. General Meade expressed his intention to General Slocum that this should be a "strong and decisive attack," which he would order made as soon as he received definite information of the approach of the Sixth Corps, which corps he intended should coöperate in the attack. The attack contemplated was, however, abandoned, owing to the fact that General Slocum, as also General Warren, General Meade's Chief Engineer, who had been sent to confer with General Slocum, advised against it. General Meade then decided to move the Fifth Corps to the left as soon as the Sixth Corps had arrived, and to attack from that wing, providing that the enemy did not in the mean time attack. The

interval before the arrival of the Sixth Corps was made use of in examining the ground in the vicinity, in perfecting the line, in strengthening the position, and in allowing the troops a much needed rest after their constant and arduous marching since General Meade had assumed command of the army. As soon as the arrival of the Sixth Corps was reported, the Fifth Corps was ordered to the left. At 3 P. M. General Meade sent the following despatch to General Halleck:—

HEADQUARTERS NEAR GETTYSBURG, July 2, 1863, 3 P. M.

MAJOR-GENERAL HALLECK, *General-in-Chief*:

I have concentrated my army at this place to-day. The Sixth Corps is just coming in, very much worn out, having been marching since 9 P. M. last night.

The army is fatigued. I have to-day, up to this hour, awaited the attack of the enemy, I having a strong position for defensive. I am not determined as yet on attacking him till his position is more developed. He has been moving on both my flanks apparently, but it is difficult to tell exactly his movements. I have delayed attacking to allow the Sixth Corps and parts of other corps to reach this place and rest the men. Expecting a battle, I ordered all my trains to the rear. If not attacked, and I can get any positive information of the position of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to move to my rear and interpose between me and Washington, I shall fall back to my supplies at Westminister. I will endeavor to advise you as often as possible. In the engagement yesterday the enemy concentrated more rapidly than we could, and towards evening, owing to the superiority of numbers, compelled the Eleventh and First Corps to fall back from the town to the heights this side, on which I am now posted. I feel fully the responsibility resting on me, but will endeavor to act with caution.

GEORGE G. MEADE,

Major-General.

As soon as the Sixth Corps had in the main arrived, and whilst the Fifth Corps was still moving to the left, General Meade, shortly before 4 P. M., rode to that part of the line, "with the view," as he says in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, "of ascertaining as far as I could the position of my own troops and the troops of the enemy, and with the intention of ordering an attack from there if the enemy did not themselves attack."

We have now, be it observed, reached four o'clock in the afternoon—that is, within one hour of the time when, as General Doubleday would have it, General Meade indicated the intention of retreating. There is nothing as yet, it must be admitted, that seems to indicate an intention or even desire to retreat, or even to withdraw from the position at Gettysburg. On the contrary, we have not only seen that the army was pushed forward as rapidly as possible to Gettysburg, with the expressed intention of fighting there, and that one attack had been ordered, and only counter-

manded upon the report of the two officers who had examined the field in their front, but, in addition, that General Meade had despatched to General Halleck that he would take the offensive if the enemy delayed doing so; and we find him an hour afterward proceeding to the left of the line with that object in view.

Incredible as it may appear, it is during the time between 9.30 A. M. and 4 P. M. which General Butterfield, in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, specifies as the interval within which General Meade gave him instructions to make out an order to withdraw the army. Why General Meade should at that time have wished to retire, or having wished to retire, did not, has never been explained. It is not necessary to the present issue to discuss this statement, but merely to say that General Meade, when before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, denied emphatically ever having given General Butterfield any such instructions, and showed so conclusively that such could not have been his intention, that this assertion is too much for even General Doubleday to adopt, who does not hesitate to accept General Butterfield's statement on almost every other point, and who usually does not scruple to retail, if it will reflect upon General Meade, any scrap of idle gossip as matter of veracious history.

General Meade had hardly arrived on the part of the field to the left, just in rear of the advanced position assumed by General Sickles with the Third Corps, and engaged in conference with that officer, when the enemy opened his batteries on the Corps, and made a most vigorous and determined attack on that part of the line, and the battle soon became general along the whole line.

This is not the place to enter into details regarding the terrible struggle which ensued, and which lasted until long after dark. We are concerned only with the action of General Meade on that memorable day, and with that action only so far as it is impugned by General Doubleday. The general history of that day's fight is well known. To the valor and admirable fighting of our troops, to the gallantry and hearty coöperation of the superior officers, and to the skilful handling of the army are owing that this determined attack of the enemy was repulsed, our lines maintained, and he driven from the field. General Meade, in constant communication with all the prominent officers who were engaged there, remained throughout the whole of the engagement on and about that part of the field where the enemy's attack was made. That he was fully alive to the emergency is evidenced by the promptness with which he brought forward reinforcements, some of which he led personally to the line of battle, and by his strenuous exertions in reforming his line and maintaining his position.

Yet General Doubleday, continuing to criticize Mr. Swinton's statements, makes the assertion that, during all this time General Meade was desirous of retreating, and he emphasizes it by italics. "This desire to retreat was supplemented," he says, "*by acts which form part of the history of the battle.*" The only way in which this statement is reconcilable with fact is, that General Doubleday refers to his own history of the

battle. As the only evidence, however, of his statement, he produces a letter of February 8, 1883, from General Alfred Pleasonton, in which he says that—

“General Meade, on the 2d of July, 1863, at Gettysburg, about five o'clock in the afternoon, gave me the order to get what cavalry and artillery I could, as soon as possible, and take up a position in rear to cover the retreat of the army from Gettysburg. I was thus occupied until ten o'clock at night, when I was recalled by an order from General Meade.”

Now, there is nothing on record that warrants either this assertion of General Doubleday's, or the statement embodied in General Pleasonton's letter quoted by him. There are no orders on file that even indicate such a design. There is no mention of or allusion to it in any way in the official report of General Meade, or of any other general officer, including that of General Pleasonton himself. There is no mention of or allusion to it in the testimony of any of the officers who appeared, in the spring of 1864, before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, including that of General Pleasonton himself; and certainly it was made amply apparent that that Committee sought for anything that might even by implication cast discredit upon the commander of the Army of the Potomac; and, judging from their testimony, Generals Doubleday and Pleasonton were in full sympathy with the Committee. There is no officer, besides General Pleasonton, who received at that time, as he alleges he did, an intimation from General Meade that he desired or intended to retreat. Strange that, of all the officers in high command in the Army of the Potomac, General Pleasonton should have been the only one to whom General Meade communicated his design!

Let us now see what reliance is to be placed on the statement of this witness of General Doubleday's. General Pleasonton, in answer to the question conveyed to him in the note from General Doubleday, answers, as we have seen, that about five o'clock in the afternoon of July 2, he was ordered to take up a position in the rear, to cover the retreat of the army from Gettysburg, and that he was engaged in this duty until ten o'clock that night. Now this in sum involves the astounding conclusion that only one hour after the attack began, and long before the Third Corps had been forced back, General Meade desired to retreat, and gave General Pleasonton an order preliminary to doing so. It is doubly astounding from the fact that General Pleasonton was, according to his own account, absent for five hours from the field of battle, throughout the most important part of the day's fight, engaged, as he alleges, in the responsible duty of preparing for retreat. But how comes it, then, that in his official report of the campaign, made in August of the same year, he omits to mention or to allude in any way to this incident of which he has now so perfect a recollection? And again, it may naturally be asked, Why, when he was before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, in March, 1864, only nine months after the battle, did he not in his testimony refer to it in even the most remote manner, but, on the contrary, as will shortly appear upon his own authority, did, in answer to

the question as to whether he knew of General Meade's ever having had any idea of retreating from Gettysburg, say that *he did not remember*. It would seem, then, that when events are recent, General Pleasonton's recollection of them is not so vivid as when they are long past; that, in fact, they do not reach the sphere of his consciousness until some years after their occurrence.

General Doubleday, aware of the discrepancies in the testimony of his witness, attempts to bolster it up by pointing out that there is further testimony of General Pleasonton's before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, which has probably escaped notice, and which, he would persuade us, is quite sufficient to bear out his charge. Let us now examine that, and see what it amounts to. In the Reports of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, Part 2d of the Supplement, will be found the testimony to which General Doubleday refers. It is in the form of a long letter, dated Oct. 16, 1865, addressed to the Committee by General Pleasonton, who had shortly after his first testimony before the Committee been relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac, giving a history of his personal experiences throughout the whole of the Rebellion. The following is an extract from page 10 of this letter, which is General Pleasonton's account there of the second day's battle at Gettysburg. He says:

"On the 2d of July, 1863, that portion of the army that was on the field was placed in a defensive position, but General Meade had so little assurance in his own ability to maintain himself, or in the strength of his position, that when the rebels partially broke our line in the afternoon of the 2d, he directed me to collect what cavalry I could, and prepare to cover the retreat of the army; and I was thus engaged until twelve o'clock that night. I mention this fact now, because when I was before your honorable Committee, and was asked the question whether General Meade ever had any idea of retreating from Gettysburg, I answered that I did not remember, the above circumstance at that time being out of my mind, and it was only afterwards recalled by my staff officers on my return to camp."

It is thus seen that this statement of General Pleasonton, made a little over two years after Gettysburg, differs entirely from that before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, made nine months after Gettysburg, and very materially from that made last February, nearly twenty years afterward. In his first statement (before the Committee) he remembered *nothing* about the question of retreat. In his second statement (in his letter to the Committee) he says that in the emergency, when the enemy partially broke our line, General Meade instructed him to take measures for the *contingency* of retreat. But in the third statement, nearly twenty years after Gettysburg, be it remembered, the time at which he represents himself as having received his orders is long before affairs assumed a critical aspect, the length of time he was absent on this alleged duty is shortened by two hours, and the question of *contingency* of retreat has been entirely discarded. To sum up, General Pleasonton, in his official report immediately after the battle,

did not consider this incident of sufficient importance to mention it. In the following year, when before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, he forgot it. Two years after the battle he gave it as evidence of unnecessary precaution. Nearly twenty years afterward he gives it succinctly, without qualification, as an explicit order for a specific purpose.

As a possible explanation of these irreconcilable statements, an incident of July 2, at Gettysburg, connected with General Pleasonton, is here introduced. This incident is alluded to in the official report of one of that general's subordinates. While it shows that certain action preparatory to retreat was actually taken by General Pleasonton on the afternoon of July 2, it also clearly shows how little confidence he himself had at that time in our ability to maintain ourselves, "when," as he says, "the rebels partially broke our line on the afternoon of July 2."

During the campaign of Gettysburg, Captain J. M. Robertson, Second U. S. Artillery (now Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A.), was in command of the First Brigade of Horse Artillery, attached to the Cavalry Corps, and therefore under the immediate orders of General Pleasonton. In that officer's official report of the campaign, made on 22d August, 1863, we find the following statement:

"Arrived near the battle-ground of Gettysburg at 5.30 A. M. on the 2d, and reported to the General commanding the Cavalry Corps, and by his directions held my batteries in reserve near the battle-ground until near dark, when, by his direction, I moved back about two miles on the Baltimore Pike and encamped for the night."

Hearing that some such movement had taken place, but not knowing by whose orders, I some years ago wrote to General Robertson for an account of the movement, and under what circumstances it came to be made. In reply, he said that on the evening of the 2d July, just at sunset, he had his reserve batteries feeding in a meadow on the banks of Rock Creek, when an officer rode furiously up to him. General Robertson continues:

"As soon as he was near enough to be heard, he said in a very excited manner, so that all the men heard him: 'General Pleasonton directs that you at once move your batteries across Stony [Rock] Creek, and retire about one mile on the Taneytown road [Baltimore Pike] and take up a position. The Rebs have broken through our centre, and it is all up with us!'"

It may be answered that this mode of address was simply that officer's, that General Pleasonton was in nowise responsible for undue excitement in an officer's demeanor when carrying his order. Still, inasmuch as he had received his order from General Pleasonton, it is reasonable to conclude that the excitement which he betrayed was communicated to him either by the words or the manner of his chief. It would seem, therefore, that General Pleasonton, at dusk of that memorable day, was so far from thinking that General Meade was unduly wanting in confidence as to his ability to maintain his position when the enemy partially broke our line, that he himself thought it was "all up with us."

Thus it has been shown that the testimony of this witness upon whom General Doubleday has greatly relied to sustain his charge against General Meade has completely broken down under its own collated weight, and that the charge, so far as this testimony is equal to sustaining it, must perforce with it fall to the ground.

Continuing to comment upon Mr. Swinton's statements regarding the point which has now been exhaustively discussed, General Doubleday says:

"By way of rebuttal, Mr. Swinton parades the following declaration of General Meade. A very slight examination will show *that it refers to a different period of the battle; to the morning of the 2d, and not to the evening.* General Meade says: 'I utterly deny, under the full solemnity and sanctity of my oath, and in the firm conviction that the day will come when the secrets of all men shall be made known—I utterly deny having intended or thought for one instant to withdraw that army, *unless the military contingencies which the future should develop during the course of the day might render it a matter of necessity that the army should be withdrawn.*' The italics are mine."

This purports to be a passage from General Meade's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, as printed in the report of the Committee, and also in the appendix to Mr. Swinton's "Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac." And he who pretends to quote it is he who, in a preceding clause of his letter, only a few lines back, speaks of himself, impliedly, "as a faithful historian." The italics, he says, are his; let that pass, although the meaning did not require them. The quotation is correct, of course, if so relatively small a matter as italicizing is noticed. We ought to feel doubly sure of that, from the fact that the letter under consideration is now *republished* on a sheet for special distribution. But is it correct? No. General Meade said:

"I utterly deny, under the full solemnity and sanctity of my oath, . . . I utterly deny *ever* having intended or thought, for one instant, to withdraw that army, unless the military contingencies which the future should develop during the course of the day might render it a matter of necessity that the army should be withdrawn."

Proceeding, General Meade added:

"I base this denial, not only on my own assertion and my own veracity, but I shall also show to the committee, from documentary evidence, the despatches and orders issued by me at different periods during that day, that if I did intend any such operation, I was at the same time doing things totally inconsistent with any such intention."

What a reply to such a clear and comprehensive statement, when his attention too had been especially drawn to it, is that of General Doubleday! He omits the concluding passage, in which General Meade said that he would not depend for sustaining his asseveration even upon his known reputation for veracity, but would show that the suspicion raised was incompatible with the events of the day. He evades the full sense of General Meade's denial of "*ever* having intended," garbled by the omission of the indispensable word "*ever*." And he coolly sums up the

significance of the statement by saying that it "*refers to a different period of the battle; to the morning of the 2d, and not to the evening.*" What a commentary—his own—is this general's upon his faithfulness as an historian!

Having now, as cannot be doubted save by the most careless reader of the evidence adduced, disposed of General Doubleday's charge that General Meade's actions on the 2d of July, as derived from the testimony of General Pleasonton, showed a desire and intention in any event to retreat; having rectified the misquotation by General Doubleday of General Meade's asseveration that he never intended to retreat, and that his despatches and orders would prove upon examination inconsistent with any such theory; and having shown by the full text of the asseveration that it covered the whole period under discussion, without reservation; let us examine into the merits of the case where General Doubleday attempts to prove the same charge against General Meade through evidence which he produces regarding the proceedings of a consultation of corps commanders held at general headquarters on the night of the 2d of July.

General Doubleday's statements as to this circumstance are so much at variance with facts, and the obscurity of his style is so great, that it is not always easy to follow him. Critical examination, however, of the text of his letter will fully bear out the statement that the meaning which he intends to convey is that in the night of July 2, General Meade, still (according to General Doubleday's theory) impressed with the desirability of retreating, called his corps commanders together and propounded certain questions to them looking to retreat.

The fact of the calling a meeting of corps commanders, of their coming together, of certain questions being propounded to them, is not denied. It is a well-known historical event. But at the very outset of the investigation it is to be noted that General Doubleday, with his habitual inaccuracy, gives the questions propounded about as incorrectly as it is possible to record any matter needing precision of statement. Yet, upon the knowledge of the character of the questions, of the answers to them, as well as of General Meade's final decision after hearing the answers, must depend the excellence or worthlessness of the judgment one can form regarding the event. Fortunately, there are other records besides General Doubleday's.

This incidentally noted, let us proceed to the statement as formulated in General Doubleday's letter. It is, that the decision of the corps commanders was to remain in the then position of the army. To use General Doubleday's own words: "General Meade dissented from the conclusion, and expressed his strong dissatisfaction." According to General Doubleday, General Meade was, in fact, overruled by his corps commanders, and thus prevented from retreating. The authority given for this is General Butterfield's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

But Mr. Swinton having pointed out in his "Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac," that General Butterfield's testimony is not confirmed by any other officer present at the council of war, General Doubleday

advances again to the assault, armed with a letter, dated Feb. 19, 1883, from General Slocum, quoted in full in his own. General Slocum says: .

"The question submitted was: 'Is it advisable for the army to remain in its present position, or to fall back?' The opinion of each corps commander was asked, commencing with the junior in rank. A majority were of the opinion that we should remain in the position then held by us. When each officer had expressed his views, General Meade said: 'Well, gentlemen, the question is settled. We will remain here, but I wish to say that I consider this no place to fight a battle.' I do not believe any officer who was present at this important meeting has forgotten General Meade's words."

With all due respect to General Slocum, be it said, he is mistaken. He was most assuredly under a false impression at the time of the council, as to certain words there spoken, and as to the person who spoke them, and, in the course of years, has forgotten that any language, such as he describes as used in the council, must have referred to the contingency of a successful flank movement by General Lee. Whatever the language, and by whomsoever used, it was not indicative of a desire to retreat; that is certain. The evidence is cumulative that no such desire existed in the breast of any member of the council. We shall find, as we proceed, that, so far from General Slocum's recollection being confirmed, as he imagines, by every officer present at the council, it is contradicted by the recollection, when the matter was recent, of several officers then present. Moreover, it can be impugned on account of his statement that the *majority* of the officers present decided to fight in the position of Gettysburg. The decision of the council was *unanimous*.

If the conviction can be brought home to General Slocum, that he is mistaken, he will be ready to acknowledge his error. But, at any rate, whether or not he can reach the conclusion that he was mistaken at the time, or that his recollection of the event is now at fault, the cause of justice can no longer be delayed, if there is aught in circumstantial evidence and human testimony combined that avails to right a wrong.

At the close of the fighting on the 2d of July, General Meade summoned his corps commanders to assemble at his headquarters, in order to obtain from them information as to the condition of their separate commands, and to confer with them as to the action to be taken on the following day. These officers could not have all assembled until 9 p. m., for the fighting on General Howard's front continued until that hour; he was present with his command until the fighting was over, and was afterwards at the conference. There were present, besides the commanding general, Generals Slocum, Sedgwick, Howard, Hancock, Newton, Sykes, Birney, A. S. Williams, and Gibbon. General Butterfield was in attendance, in his capacity of chief-of-staff; General Pleasonton, commander of the Cavalry Corps, was not present.

After a long conversation regarding the events of the day, and discussion of the probabilities as to General Lee's future movements, and of the most advisable action to take, General Meade finally condensed the

points to be decided, and submitted them in the form of the following questions: ¹

QUESTIONS ASKED

1. "Under existing circumstances, is it advisable for this army to remain in its present position or to retire to another nearer its base of supplies?"
2. "It being determined to remain in present position, shall the army attack or wait the attack of the enemy?"
3. "If we wait attack, how long?"

REPLIES

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Gibbon. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Correct position of the army, but would not retreat." 2. "In no condition to attack, in his opinion." 3. "until he moves." 3. "Till enemy moves." |
| Williams. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Stay." 2. "Wait attack." 3. "One day." |
| Birney. | "Same as General Williams." |
| Sykes. | Do. do. |
| Newton. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Correct position of the army, but would not retreat." 2. "By all means not attack." 3. "If we wait, it will give them a chance to cut our line." |
| Howard. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Remain." 2. "Wait attack until 4 P. M. to-morrow." 3. "If don't attack, attack them." |
| Hancock. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Rectify position without moving so as to give up field." 2. "Not attack unless our communications are cut." 3. "Can't wait long; can't be idle." |
| Sedgwick. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Remain"
"and wait attack."
"at least one day." |
| Slocum. | "Stay and fight it out." |

It certainly should be demonstrable, even without adducing any direct evidence, that the possibility of a flank movement by General Lee, threatening the lines of communication of the army, and if successful in

¹ These questions and replies are taken from the original minutes of the Council at Gettysburg, of the 2d of July, 1863, and are among the papers of General Meade.

cutting them with a large force, entailing the taking up of a new position, ought to have been, and was, discussed in the council of war. We now know, since the close of the war, through General Longstreet, that the plan of attempting to turn the left flank of the Army of the Potomac was proposed and strongly advocated by him to General Lee. General Meade's first quoted despatch to General Halleck explicitly states it as a contingency; his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, shortly to be quoted, also explicitly states it as a contingency; for which, as in the case of any contingency, it is a duty to prepare. It would be incredible that a contingency which every tyro in the art of war sees involved in strategy, especially where the safety of a capital is concerned, should not have been considered by veterans. The propriety, nay, the necessity, for the consideration of this question is so obvious that it seems puerile to discuss it. The fact that it was considered is plainly in evidence, not only from direct testimony, but from the mere wording of the first question: "Under existing circumstances, is it advisable for this army to remain in its present position, or to retire to another nearer its base of supplies?" Here is no suggestion of retreat, but merely of strategical movement. The questions, too, let it be remembered, were propounded *after* the discussion, and must represent the extreme range of divergence of opinion that had been recognized through that process; and through the general tenor of the answers to them is very plainly to be seen that the range of divergence never had reached for one of its extremes the possibility of retreat, but merely of retiring to a better position in the given contingency; and that there was ample confidence among the officers as to the ability of the army in its position at that time to hold its own against any direct attack of the enemy, for we find them unanimous in their opinion as to the advisability of remaining in the position then held.

There is, it will be observed, nothing, either in the character of the questions or in that of the replies, that would warrant one in supposing that the Commanding General, or any one else, favored retreating. And, if one be called upon to believe that, without expressing or implying the fact in his formal questions, the Commanding General did favor it,—a circumstance that could not have failed to be known through the previous discussion,—it is strange that this fact is not indicated in the agreement with his opinion of a single one of the replies of the corps commanders, some of whom had the greatest respect for and reliance upon his judgment.

It was never dreamed of by General Meade, or by those about him who were not hostile to him from the moment he took command, that such construction as that indicated could be put upon anything which had taken place at the council. As far as known to them, no question upon the subject was raised until nine months after the battle, when the allegation appeared in the newspapers as one of the charges made against General Meade before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. General Meade being himself before the Committee at the time when his attention was attracted to the published statements of some of the testi-

mony regarding the council of war of the 2d of July, made the following statement to the Committee, to be found in the printed reports:—

“Having thus denied any recollection of having issued, or directed to be issued, any order on the morning of the 2d of July for the retreat of my army before any attack from the enemy, I now desire to refer to a consultation of my corps commanders held on that evening, which, it has occurred to me, may possibly be the groundwork for this report that I had directed an order to retreat.

“On the evening of the 2d of July, after the battle of that day had ceased, and darkness had set in, being aware of the very heavy losses of the First and Eleventh Corps on the 1st of July, and knowing how severely the Third Corps, the Fifth Corps, and other portions of the army had suffered in the battle of the 2d of July—in fact, as subsequently ascertained, out of the 24,000 men killed, wounded, and missing, which was the amount of my losses and casualties at Gettysburg, over 20,000 of them had been put *hors de combat* before the night of the 2d of July; and taking into consideration the number of stragglers, and weakening of my army from the two days’ battle, my ignorance of the condition of the corps, and the moral condition of the troops, caused me to send for my corps commanders to obtain from them the exact condition of affairs in their separate commands, and to consult and advise with them as to what, if anything, should be done on the morrow. The strong attack of the enemy that day upon my left flank, and their persistent efforts to obtain possession of what is called Round Top Mountain, induced the supposition that possibly, on the next day, a very persistent attack might be made, or that a movement, upon their part, to my left and rear might be made to occupy the lines of communication I then held with the Taneytown Road and the Baltimore Pike.

“The questions discussed by this council were, first, whether it was necessary for us to assume any different position from what we then held; and secondly, whether, if we continued to maintain the position we then held, our operations the next day should be offensive or defensive. The opinion of the council was unanimous, which agreed fully with my own views, that we should maintain our lines as they were then held, and that we should wait the movements of the enemy and see whether he made any further attack before we assumed the offensive. I felt satisfied that the enemy would attack again, as subsequently proved to be the case, for he made a vigorous assault upon my right flank, which lasted from daylight in the morning until ten o’clock. He then made one of his heaviest assaults upon my left and left centre, which lasted from one o’clock until six in the evening.

“I have been specific in giving the details of this council, because it has occurred to me as possible that some erroneous report of what took place there may have given rise to the idea that I desired to withdraw my army and retreat, and that I called my corps commanders together to know if they were in favor of retreating.

“I should like to have the Committee, and I trust they will do so, call upon all the principal officers I had upon that field—the corps com-

manders and division commanders; that their attention should be called to all the points to which I have alluded here; and that they should be specifically questioned as to their recollection and views upon those points."

Here is the issue distinctly marked out in the statement of General Meade—"The opinion of the council was unanimous, *which agreed fully with my own views, that we should maintain our lines as they were then held*"—as contrasted with that of General Doubleday, which is as follows:—

"On the evening of the 2d, after sending Pleasonton off, General Meade called a council of war and put the question to the corps commanders whether they were in favor of remaining on the ridge or retreating. Our losses had been heavy and the enemy were then attacking our right, which was denuded of troops. Nevertheless, the council voted to remain and endeavor to hold the ridge. *General Meade dissented from the conclusion and expressed his strong dissatisfaction.*"

It remains now to summon witnesses on General Meade's side, whose competency cannot be denied even by General Doubleday, as it rests upon the same foundation of excellence affirmed by him of General Slocum's testimony quoted by him—presence at the council of war.

General Meade, determined to put at rest the injurious statements made and published regarding his intention of retreating from Gettysburg, addressed the following circular letter to Generals Slocum, Sedgwick, Sykes, Newton, A. S. Williams, and Gibbon.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC, *March 10, 1864.*

CIRCULAR.

SIR: Your attention is respectfully invited to the articles, which have recently appeared in the newspapers, charging the Commanding General with favoring a retreat of the army from Gettysburg on the 2d July last.

These articles are supposed to be based upon the transactions of a council, or meeting of corps commanders, held on the evening of the 2d July; and, if you have no objection to so doing, the Commanding General desires that you will furnish him in the course of to-day with a short statement, giving your recollection of what transpired at the council, and mentioning whether he at any time insisted on the withdrawal of the army from before Gettysburg.

By Command of Maj.-Gen. Meade,

S. WILLIAMS,

Assist. Adjt.-General.

This letter, marked as addressed among the rest to General Slocum, who was at that time in the West, under General Sherman, was never received by him. The following are the replies of the other officers addressed:—

HEADQUARTERS SIXTH CORPS, *March 10, 1864.*

BRIG.-GEN. S. WILLIAMS,

Assist. Adjt.-Gen.

GENERAL: My attention has been called to several articles which have recently appeared in the papers insinuating or charging the general

commanding the Army of the Potomac with ordering or favoring a retreat of the army on the evening of July 2d at Gettysburg.

I took no minutes of the council of corps commanders held on the evening of that day, but my present recollection is that three questions, viz., of attacking the enemy, of sustaining an attack, or taking up a new position, were submitted. The council was unanimous (with, I think, one exception) to sustain the attack in our then present position.

At no time in my presence did the General Commanding insist or advise a withdrawal of the army, for such advice would have great weight with me and I know the matter did not engage my serious attention.

I am positive that the General Commanding could not have insisted, much less have given the order to withdraw the army from its position. In a council on the evening of the 3d [4th] the two questions of following the enemy or moving on parallel lines were submitted, and, I think, the council were unanimous, and their decision adopted by the General of moving parallel to the enemy and attacking him when possible.

I am very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN SEDGWICK,

Maj.-Gen. Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST ARMY CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

March 10, 1864.

GENERAL:

Your circular note of this date in relation to reports, to the effect that the Commanding General advocated a retreat of the army on the second day of July last, and particularly in reference to the proceedings of a council of war, held on the night of the second, has been received.

In reply I have to state, that I was frequently with the Commanding General on that day, and was likewise present at the council, and nothing that I heard him say, has ever given me the impression that he insisted on the withdrawal of the army from before Gettysburg.

There was a discussion in the council not concerning a retreat, but concerning the dispositions proper to make should the enemy endeavor to turn our position, by getting between us and Emmettsburg, by passing entirely around our left flank—and I imagine this to have been the exclusive foundation of such report to the prejudice of the Commanding General.

Respectfully your most obt. servt.,

JOHN NEWTON,

Major-Gen. Comdg.

BRIG.-GEN. S. WILLIAMS, A. A. G.,

Headqrs. A. of P.

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH CORPS A. P., *March 10, 1864.*

GENERAL:

I have seen in late papers, and in the speech of a member of the U. S. Senate, statements charging you with having ordered a retreat of the army at the battle of Gettysburg.

I commanded a corps in that battle—was present at a meeting on the nights of the second and third [4th] of July when yourself and corps commanders discussed the events then taking place—remember distinctly the number of soldiers we thought we could take into action after the fight on the second—remember more distinctly the expressed determination of each commander present to fight that battle out then and there, and never received or heard of any order directing a retreat of the army.

I am, General, very respectfully,
your obt. servant,

GEO. SYKES,

Major-Gen. Commdg. Fifth Corps.

MAJ.-GEN. MEADE, *Comdg. A. P.*

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST DIVISION, 12TH CORPS, ARMY OF THE
CUMBERLAND, TULLAHOMA, TENN., *March 23, 1864.*

GENERAL:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular communication of tenth instant.

My recollections of the council or meeting of corps commanders held on the evening of 2d July last are briefly these:

After some desultory conversation having reference, mainly, to the amount of supplies and the strength of each corps, and, incidentally, to the results of the afternoon's attack upon our left and to the defensible character of the position around Gettysburg compared with others named—three questions were read by the Chief of Staff for the opinion of the general officers present. In substance they were, 1st. Shall the army remain in its present position? 2d. If so, how long? 3d. Shall it act on the defensive or offensive? The vote was (I think unanimous) to remain and to act on the defensive and the Commanding General announced that his orders would be in accordance with this opinion.

I heard no expression from him which led me to think he was in favor of withdrawing the army from before Gettysburg.

I have the honor to be, General, very respectfully,
your obedient servant,

A. S. WILLIAMS,

Brig.-Gen. of Vols.

BRIG.-GENERAL S. WILLIAMS,

Asst. Adj.-General Army of the Potomac.

HEADQUARTERS RENDEZVOUS FOR DRAFTED MEN,
PHILADELPHIA, PA., *March 14, 1864.*

BRIG.-GEN. S. WILLIAMS, *Adjt.-Gen. Army of the Potomac.*

General: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular of the 10th inst. in regard to the council of war held at General Meade's headquarters on the evening of the 2d of July last, and in reply to state:

1st. I was a member of that council, having been placed by General Hancock in command of the Second Corps, when he was detached to

take command of the Third Corps, after its defeat on the afternoon of the 2d.

2d. The result of the day's fight was then, I believe, for the first time fully known. It, together with our military situation, was fully discussed and commented upon by the members. It thus appeared that the Third Corps had been badly defeated, and rendered for the time comparatively useless; that the enemy taking advantage of the absence of a portion of the Twelfth Corps sent over to the assistance of our left centre after the defeat of the Third Corps, had obtained a footing in a portion of our line on the right, and that to the right of Cemetery Hill he had driven a portion of the Eleventh Corps out of the line, taken possession of some of our batteries there, and had been himself driven out by the timely arrival of Carroll's Brigade, sent by me according to General Hancock's direction, over to the right "to the sound of the firing." Otherwise our line remained intact.

3d. One of the corps commanders (Newton) urged some objections against the military position of our line and when the council came to decide upon a number of points, which were written out by General Butterfield, Chief of Staff, and submitted to its vote, one of the questions was to this effect: "Should the army remain in its present position or retire to a better one?" Being the youngest member of the council I was required to vote first, and on this particular point I voted (having General Newton's objection in my mind, and having confidence in his judgment as a military engineer) that we should as far as possible correct our position, but on no account to change it so much that any one could construe it into a retreat. My recollection is that General Newton voted substantially the same way, and that every other member voted simply to remain and offer battle. So that the decision of the council to remain in position was *unanimous*.

4th. I never heard General Meade say one word in favor of a retreat, nor do I believe that he did so, being confident I should have [*heard*] it, the council meeting in a room not to exceed ten feet square. I recollect there was great good feeling amongst the corps commanders at their agreeing so unanimously and General Meade's announcement in a decided manner, "Such, then, is the decision." There were a number of other questions, of minor importance, put and decided, which I do not deem it necessary to refer to.

It may not be out of place here to state that during a portion of the sitting of the council, which continued up to nearly twelve o'clock, fighting was going on on the right of our line, where the portion of the Twelfth Corps, returning to its position from the left centre, was attempting to dislodge the enemy from the footing he had gained in our line.

I am, General, very respect'ly, your obt. servt.,

JOHN GIBBON,

Brig.-Gen. Vols. Commandg.

It is thus seen that, besides the General Commanding, five out of the ten other officers present at the council of war on the 2d of July an-

swered the circular adversely to the charge made against General Meade. Why the circular was not sent to General Birney is evident from the circumstance that, at the time of its transmission to others, General Meade, having learned that General Birney's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War had reflected upon him, addressed a letter to him individually, asking for an account of it, with which account General Birney, replying that his testimony belonged to the Committee, declined to furnish him. Why the circular was not sent to Generals Howard and Hancock is unknown. To correct the popular presumption that all the officers at the council of war on the 2d of July were summoned before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, it is well incidentally to mention that of the eleven present, inclusive of the commanding general, only General Meade, and Generals Sedgwick, Hancock, Birney, Gibbon, and Butterfield were before that Committee.

While General Birney's testimony before the Committee cannot be construed as in the main favorable to the commanding general, there is nothing in it that supports the particular charge of desire to retreat. He says:—

"There was a council of the corps commanders held at General Meade's headquarters that night [July 2d], of which I was one present. It was there determined to remain and fight the next day; to make no attack the next day, but to receive one should the enemy make it.

"General Meade said that his orders were to cover Baltimore and Washington, and he seemed indisposed to hazard a battle except on the most favorable terms."

Further on in his testimony, in answer to the direct question, "Do you recollect how General Meade stood on that question?" [as to a change of position by retiring], General Birney replied:—

"General Meade stated that his orders were positively to cover Washington and Baltimore, and that he did not wish to hazard a battle without he was certain of victory; that was his statement to the council. He said that he intended to be guided by the opinions of his corps commanders."

Thereupon, being asked whether the council might not have understood General Meade "to be rather of the opinion that it was safest to retire," General Birney answered merely, "I could only state my own impression. I have given his language as I remember it."

The reader has now substantially before him, either through testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, or through letters, the statements of the Commanding General and of all the officers present at the council of war on the 2d of July, excepting Generals Hancock, Howard, and Butterfield, present as chief-of-staff. It remains, then, only to consider the attitude of Generals Hancock and Howard with reference to the question under discussion. General Slocum not only places himself on record through his letter, already quoted from, to General Doubleday, but his letter is corroborative of General Butterfield's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

General Hancock said in the only part of his testimony before the Committee, relevant to the present issue:—

"That night [July 2] this council was held. After each corps commander had reported the actual condition of things along his front, the question was submitted to the council. General Meade being present, and General Butterfield questioning the members whether we should remain there or the army fall back to a better position,—I understood with a view of protecting our supplies,—one corps commander, I think it was General Newton, said he did not think the position of Gettysburg a very good one. General Gibbon, who was the junior officer, I believe, and voted first, said that he had not seen the entire ground, but he had great confidence in General Newton's military eye for these matters, and he voted in accordance with that view of the case, except that he objected to anything that looked like a retreat. I understood afterwards that General Newton really had the same view, and did not propose to make a retreat. But all the other commanders, I understood, said they wished to fight the battle there, and General Meade announced that to be the decision. The council then adjourned, and that was the last operation of the second day of the fight."

This testimony of General Hancock's being only negative as to the question at issue, I took the liberty, on April 27 last, of addressing him a letter covering specifically the points in General Doubleday's communication to the *New York Times*. In his reply, through an officer of his staff, on April 30, he regards his statement before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, made when the whole matter was fresh and distinct in his mind, as covering every point as far as he is concerned. Testimony, therefore, which up to that time was negative, becomes in its nature positive, to the effect that he has nothing further to offer. What he had to offer has just been quoted.

General Howard, who, as has been mentioned, was not before the Committee, and to whom the circular of General Meade was not sent, still remains. To him also I addressed a letter at the same time, covering the points in General Doubleday's letter, and have received from him the following reply:—

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PLATTE,
OMAHA, NEB., *June 9, 1883.*

COLONEL GEORGE MEADE, 309 WALNUT STREET, PHILA.

MY DEAR SIR:

* * * * *

I will set down the impressions left on my mind by the council during the night of the 2d of July. A question was submitted to us, substantially as to whether we should continue in the position then occupied by the army or withdraw to another. Your father stated to us clearly the existing condition of affairs, and General Butterfield, who was then chief-of-staff, read the question. It was quite freely discussed. One officer, a corps commander, said that, strategically, the position was not a good one. Some one said, "Why so?" The officer answered, "Because Lee could so easily turn the position if he chose." I did not hear your

father utter a word which made me think that he then favored a withdrawal of his troops. Every officer either urged the remaining or believed it too late to take up new ground. Certainly when your father announced the decision, which he did after a formal vote, he expressed no dissatisfaction or dissent from our opinions. With sincere regard for your excellent father's memory, official and personal, and pleasant recollections of yourself, I remain

Yours truly,

OLIVER O. HOWARD,
Brigadier General U. S. A.

We have now before us the testimony of every officer present at the council of war of July 2, and excepting that of Generals Slocum and Butterfield, it is adverse to the charge of General Doubleday. The testimony of General Meade and of General Hancock is printed in the reports of the Committee on the Conduct of the War; the letters, already introduced, of Generals Sedgwick, Newton, Sykes, A. S. Williams, and Gibbon, in reply to General Meade's circular letter, are, and have been for years, on file in the War Department, where of course General Doubleday, "as a faithful historian," has had access to them, and in his researches has consulted these authoritative records, and yet he not only does not accept them, but does not even mention their existence.

General Warren, writing to me some years ago upon the subject of this council, said:—

"I know General Meade had made up his mind to hold his ground to the last minute, without any idea of retreating, and if such question was then considered, the decision was made beforehand."

It is to be gathered from the letter of General Gibbon, that the council was in session until nearly midnight, and that it broke up immediately after coming to a decision. As at 11 P. M., July 2, General Meade sent the following despatch to General Halleck, that is, an hour before the council terminated, it is fair to presume what General Meade's intentions were before the decision of the corps commanders had been reached.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 2, 1863, 11 P. M.*

GENERAL HALLECK: The enemy attacked me about 4 P. M. this day, and, after one of the severest contests of the war, was repulsed at all points. We have suffered considerably in killed and wounded; among the former are Brigadier-General Paul Zook; and among the wounded, Generals Sickles, Barlow, Graham; and Warren, slightly. We have taken a large number of prisoners. I shall remain in my present position to-morrow, but am not prepared to say, until better advised of the condition of the army, whether my operations will be of an offensive or defensive character.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major General.

If any testimony be demanded, additional to that which now seems conclusive against the charge that General Meade intended to retreat, it will only be necessary to refer to that of General Hunt, Chief of Artillery, General Warren, Chief Engineer, and General Seth Williams, Adjutant-General, of the Army of the Potomac, given before the Committee on the Conduct of the War. It shows that they never understood from General Meade that he had any desire or intention to retreat from Gettysburg. True, they were not present at the conference on the night of July 2, and also, their testimony is negative; but if it be considered how high and important their positions in that army were, that all of them, from the necessity of their positions, were near the person of the Commanding General, and that in all he had the greatest confidence, and possessed for them the highest esteem, it ought to be apparent that he would hardly, indeed could hardly, conceal from them, even if he wished, his desire or intention concerning so momentous an operation as a retreat of the army. The confidence that General Meade had in General Hunt is incidentally shown in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, and that which he had for the others, by his having invited them successively on June 28, as soon as he had taken command of the army, to assume temporarily, in addition to their own respective duties, those of chief-of-staff. General Meade intended that General Humphreys should eventually fill this position, and had so notified him, but he concluded that it was for the best interests of the service that General Humphreys should continue during the emergency in command of his division in the Third Corps, as he relied greatly on him as a main dependence in the handling of that corps during the impending battle. This decision was also in keeping with General Humphreys's own wishes.

It was solely owing to the decision in the case of General Humphreys, and to the disinclination of Generals Warren and Seth Williams to accept the position, through their belief that in the emergency they could render better service in the positions which they respectively held, that induced General Meade to come to the conclusion to retain General Butterfield, General Hooker's chief-of-staff, temporarily in the same position, in consideration of the fact that he was more familiar at that time than any one else could be with the *personnel* of the army and the routine of the office. If any one of the three officers mentioned, General Humphreys, General Warren, and General Williams, had been chief-of-staff on the eventful day of the 2d of July, at Gettysburg, the nation would not have witnessed nine months afterward the humiliating spectacle of its victorious general, who had received the thanks of the Government and of the people, compelled to defend himself from the aspersions of having intended to retreat from the field he won.

If anything be wanting beyond what has been said to enable one to form an estimate of General Doubleday's fitness for the task of a historian, it is only necessary to consider in connection with his book the concluding paragraph of his late letter, which letter was written to justify

the statements of his book. There, for the first time, he freely admits, he says, that in what he is pleased to style his criticism of General Meade before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, he was "unnecessarily harsh" in his language. He accounts for it by saying that, "just before the battle of Gettysburg," he thought he had reason to believe that General Meade was about to convert the Army of the Potomac into a "partisan force, which was to become the personal appanage of an individual." Naturally he resented that, but found out afterwards that he was "mistaken in this respect; that he had no intention of reorganizing the army in the interest of General McClellan. Indeed, he could not have done so without displacing himself. When I understood the circumstances I did not blame him for his action toward me at Gettysburg."

"Just before the battle of Gettysburg," leaves a short space of time to have allowed of such a belief, considering that General Meade had not expected to be placed in command of the army; that he took command of it on the 28th of June; that the corps were widely separated, feeling for the enemy, preparatory to concentration; and that battle evidently could not be long postponed, as in point of fact the first day's encounter was on the 1st of July. It is strange that General Doubleday, upon having his suspicions aroused "just before the battle of Gettysburg," did not discard the unworthy thought upon which they turned with regard to General Meade, if not from the point of view of being unworthy and unwarrantable, at least from the perception that under the circumstance of General Meade's having so much soliciting his attention, it was almost impossible that he could have conceived and communicated any such intention. Not only was this not so; but we find General Doubleday accounting for the undue harshness of his testimony against General Meade, nine months after the battle of Gettysburg, by the fact that he was still laboring under the false impression there received regarding General Meade's intentions.

Now, for the first time, in his late letter, he grants that his language in his testimony against General Meade before the Committee on the Conduct of the War was unduly harsh. It has taken, then, nearly twenty years to bring him to this *amende honorable*; but, unhappily, there is a remarkable coincidence in point of time between it and the appearance of Mr. Swinton's strictures upon his book.

Discrepancies of statement apart, General Doubleday is in any case unfitted for the task of a historian, as proved by the facts that he believes readily and implicitly on hearsay; that he is not open to correction of false impressions; that even after a long interval of time, nearly twenty years, he is ignorant of his ground, or sure of it only from his belief in the ignorance of others as to what is contained in the national archives of the war.

The reader curious in historical matters will naturally desire to know what that action of General Meade's at Gettysburg could have been towards General Doubleday, for which General Doubleday no longer blamed him as soon as his false impressions regarding General Meade had

been dissipated. General Meade, upon learning of the fall of General Reynolds, commanding the First Corps, at once sent orders to General Newton, commanding a division of the Sixth Corps, to go immediately to Gettysburg and assume command of the First Corps, thus relieving and superseding General Doubleday, who, as senior officer, had succeeded to the command of the corps upon the death of its gallant and able chief. The action was not induced by some foolish remarks of General Doubleday's, which he imagined had reached his general, but solely by that general's view as to the qualifications of a corps commander. The reader is now in a position to judge whether or not General Doubleday's knowledge of and belief in General Meade's alleged intentions is an extraordinary coincidence with his being superseded as commander of the First Corps. Two days after the battle General Doubleday was relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac, and went to Washington, where he remained until the close of the war.

When the announcement was made that General Doubleday had been selected to write the volume in the Scribner's Series covering the campaign and battle of Gettysburg, it was generally considered the most extraordinary choice that could have been made, to produce what was at the same time announced as "a full and authoritative military history" of that important part of the war. General Doubleday's work, however, surpassed all expectations, for a more incongruous, bitterly prejudiced, and unreliable performance cannot be imagined. It was fondly hoped, from the almost universal condemnation the book received, that that was the last that would be heard of it, or of him as an author.

Of the distinguished officers mentioned, whose names are indissolubly associated with the grand achievements of the Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg, who in hearty support of their commanding general battled bravely on those historic hills, each in his own sphere doing the best that in him lay for his country's cause, who are revered by the veterans of the army as the ideal of all that is able, brave, and true, we find arrayed on their commanding general's side Sedgwick, Hancock, Sykes, Newton, Howard, Gibbon, A. S. Williams, Hunt, Warren, Seth Williams; and in sorry contrast, Doubleday, Butterfield, and Pleasonton. It is high time that dispute should cease as to the award due him who won the greatest battle of the war, upon which it turned, saving the nation's capital, and giving to the Rebellion a blow from which it never recovered. It must cease, under penalty of the malcontents making themselves and the nation ridiculous. It will cease, for all battles, save for a time Gettysburg, have been universally recognized and acknowledged as won by the general in command; and despite all its escaped heroes, it remains for history to record that, from the beginning to the end of the Rebellion, it was only when Meade was chief that Lee was ever met in pitched battle and defeated on equal terms.

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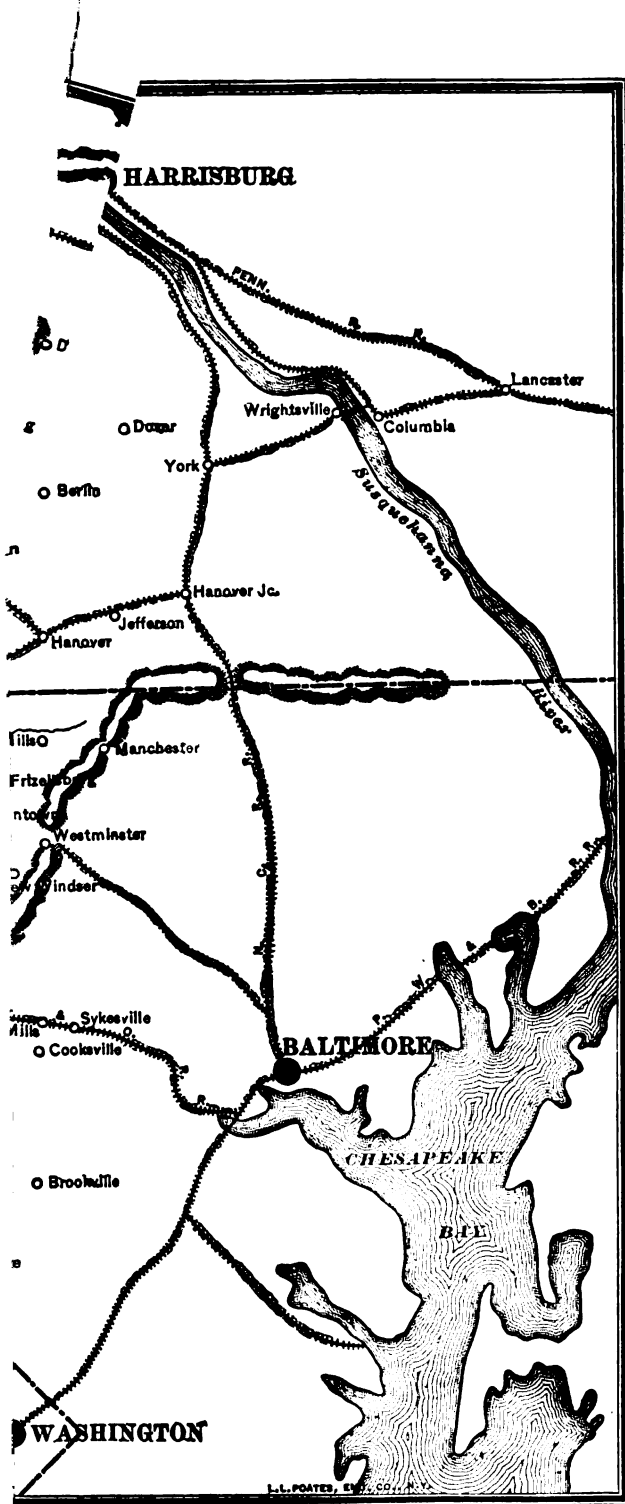
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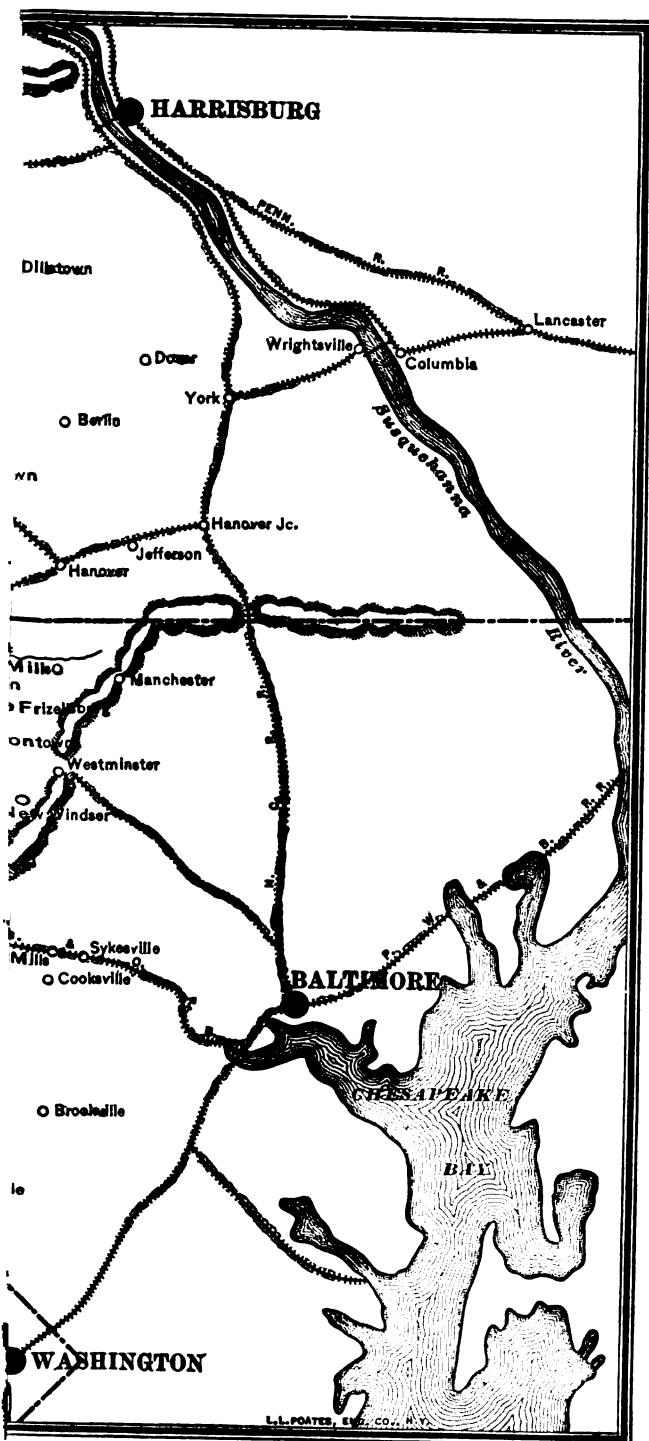
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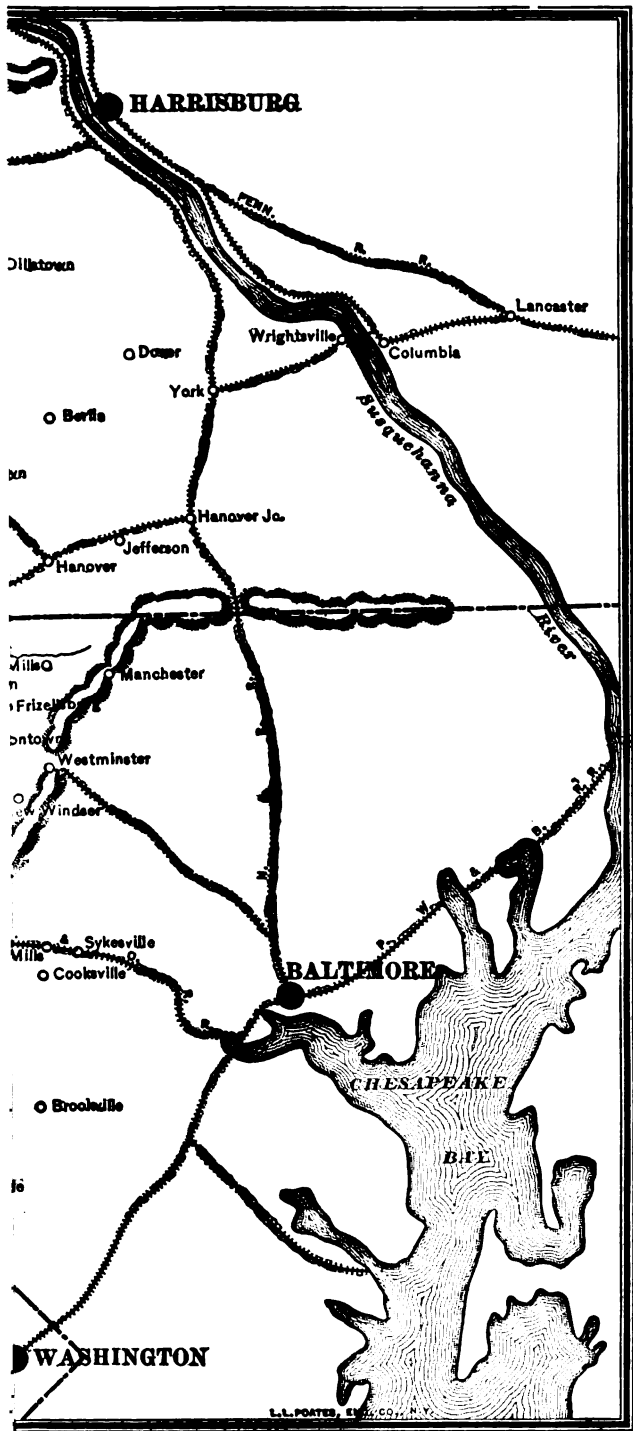
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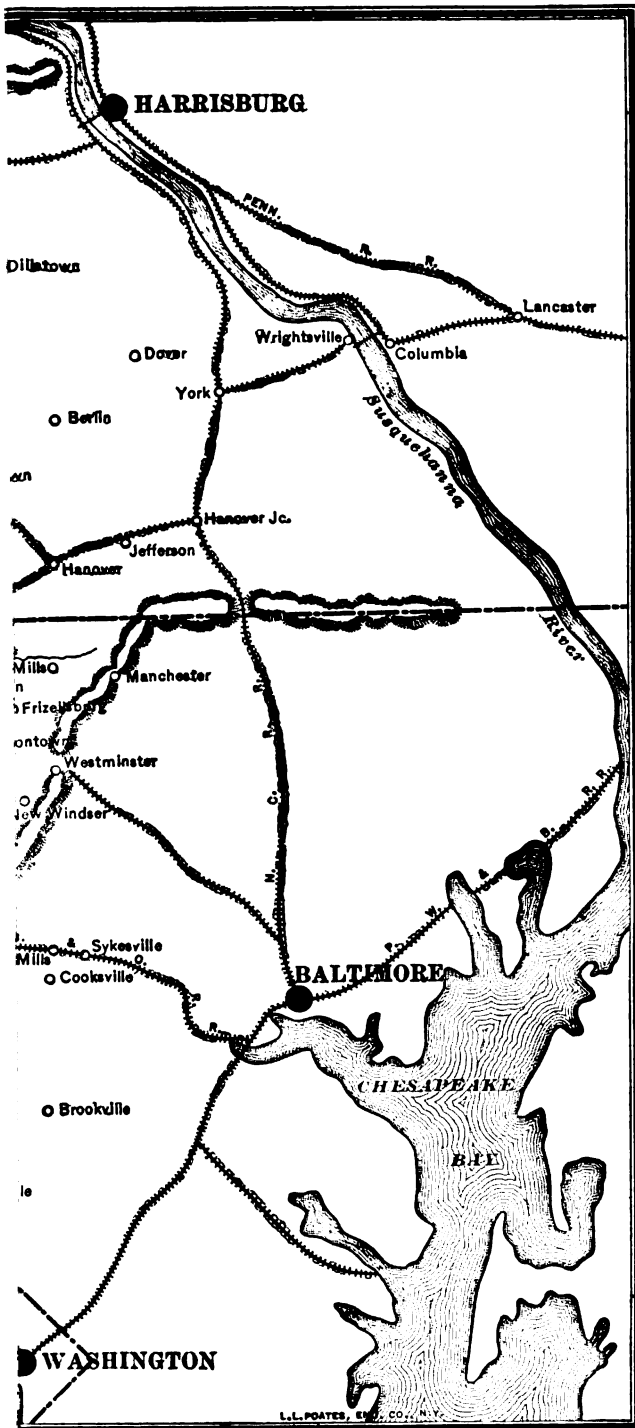
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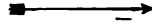
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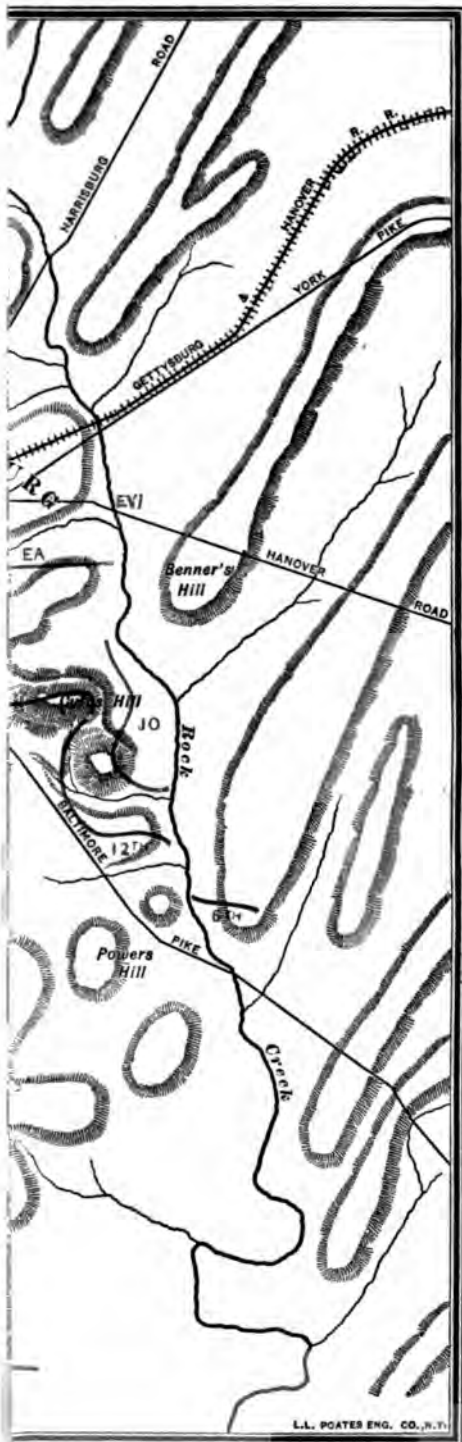




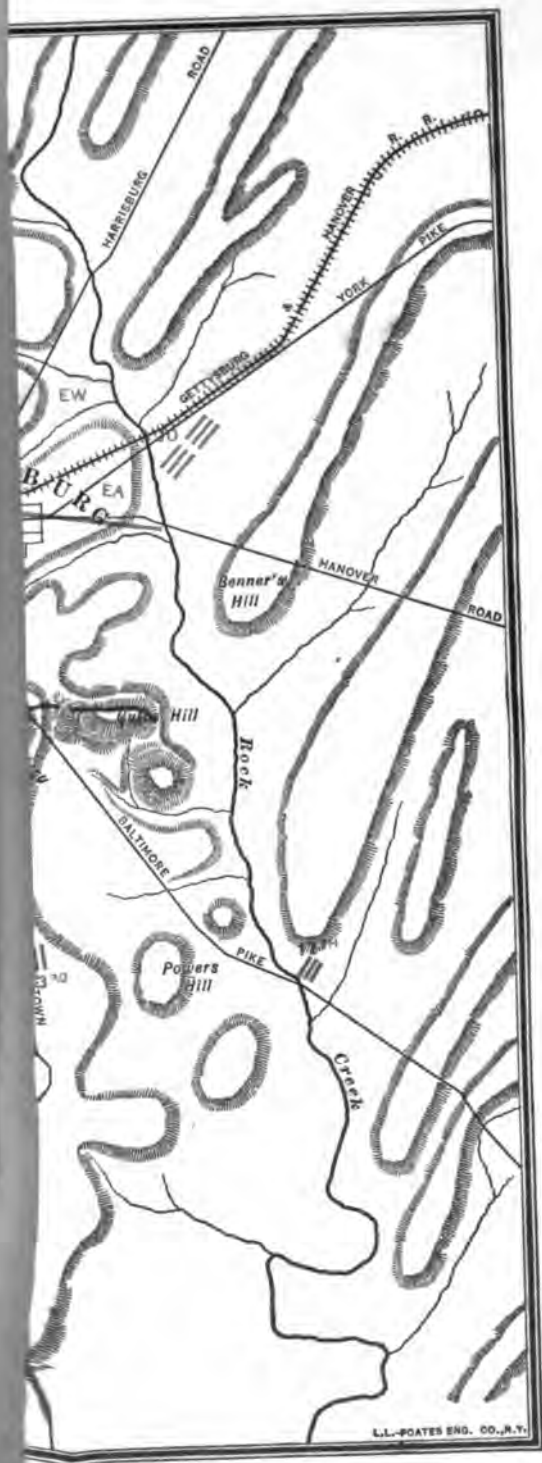
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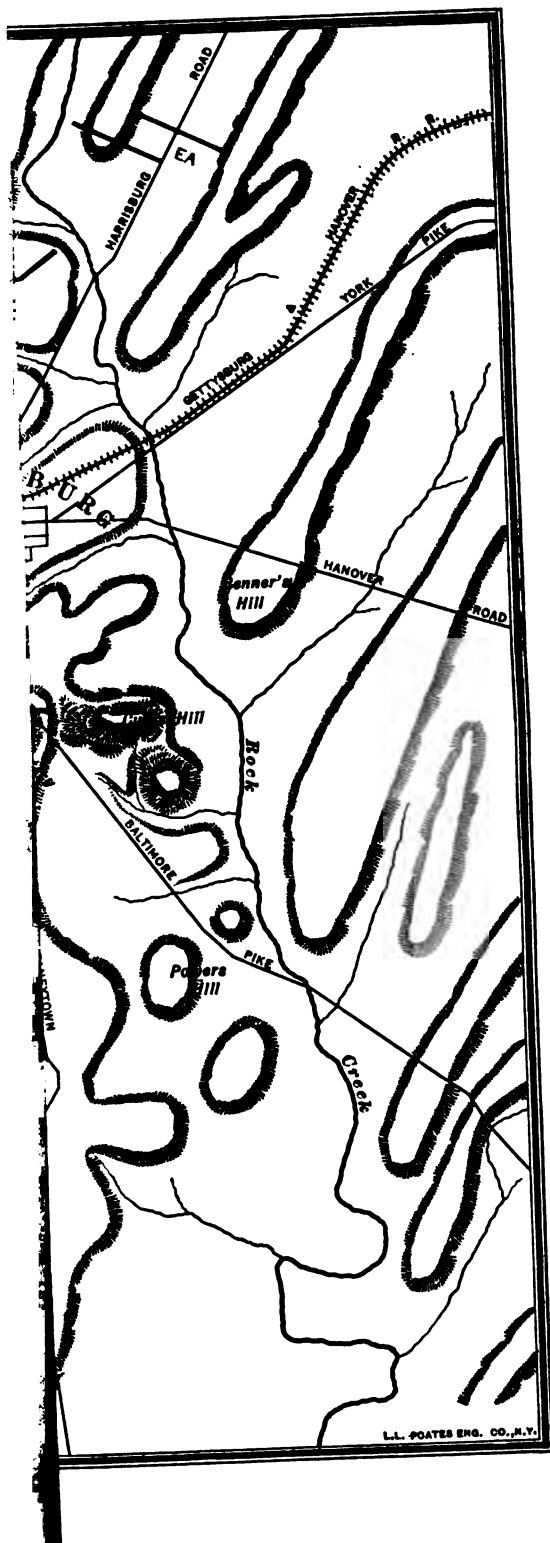


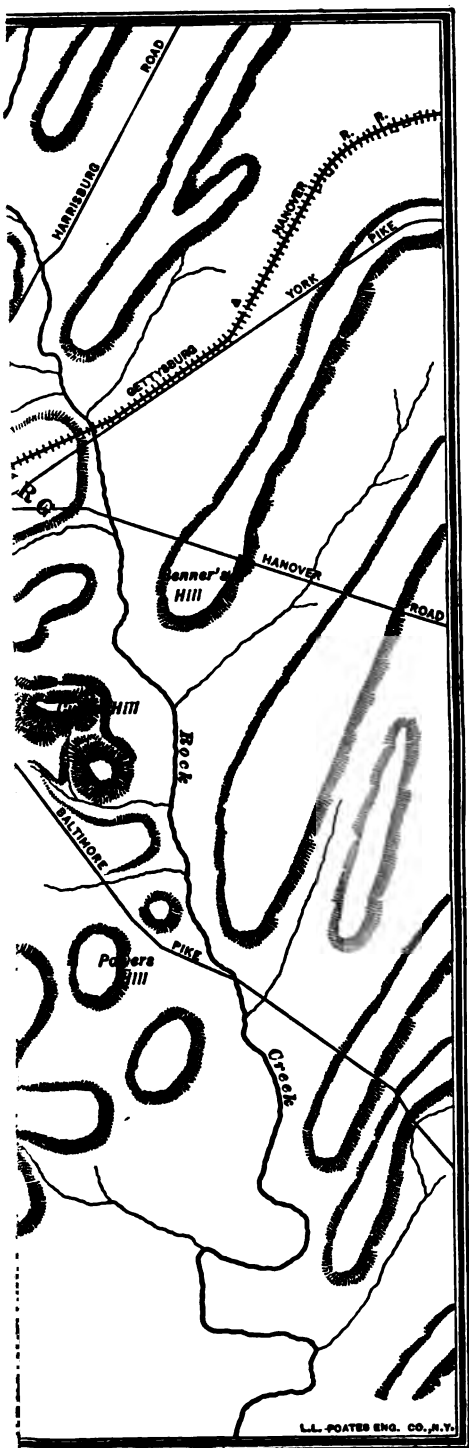


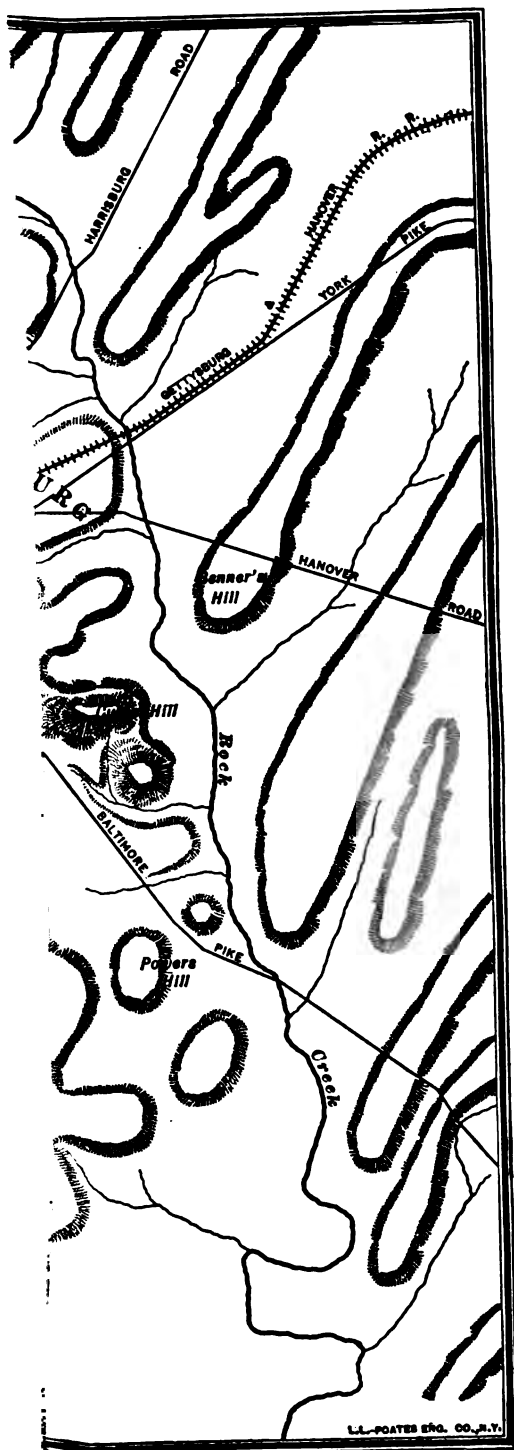


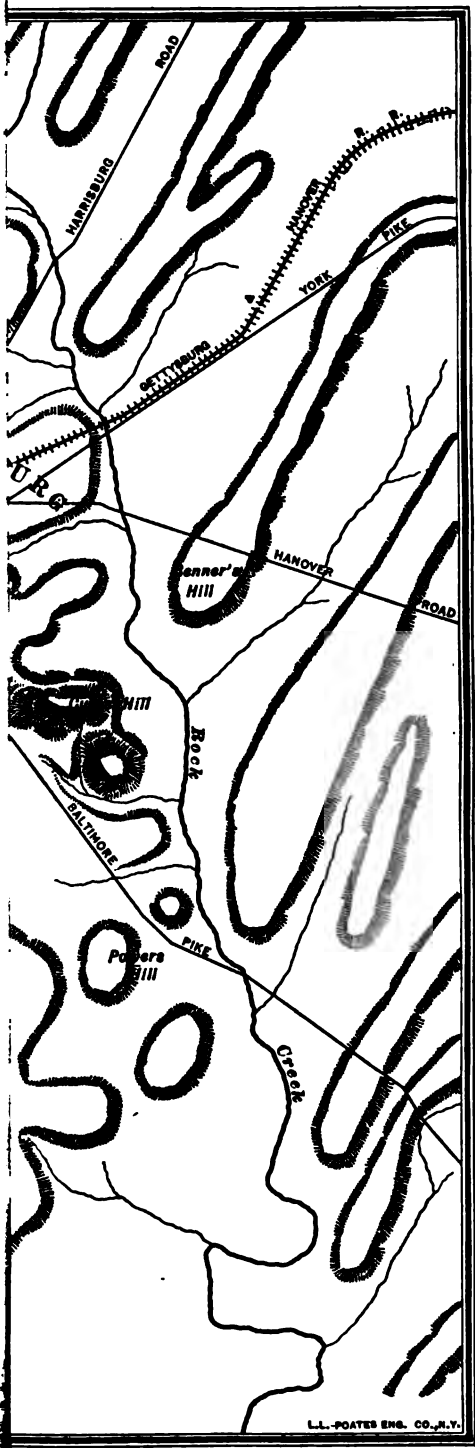
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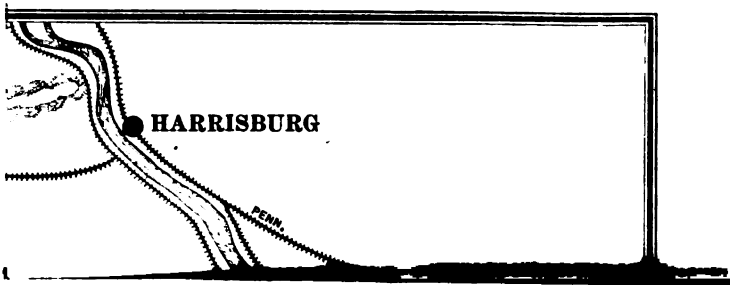


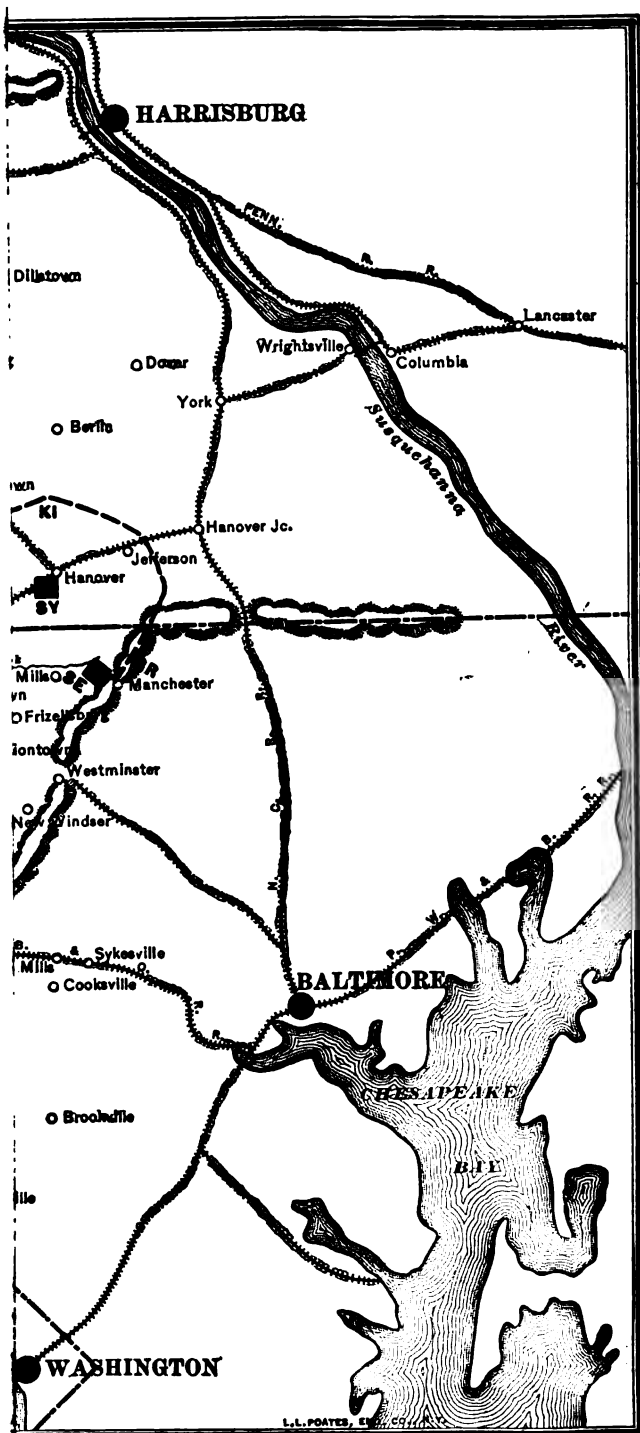


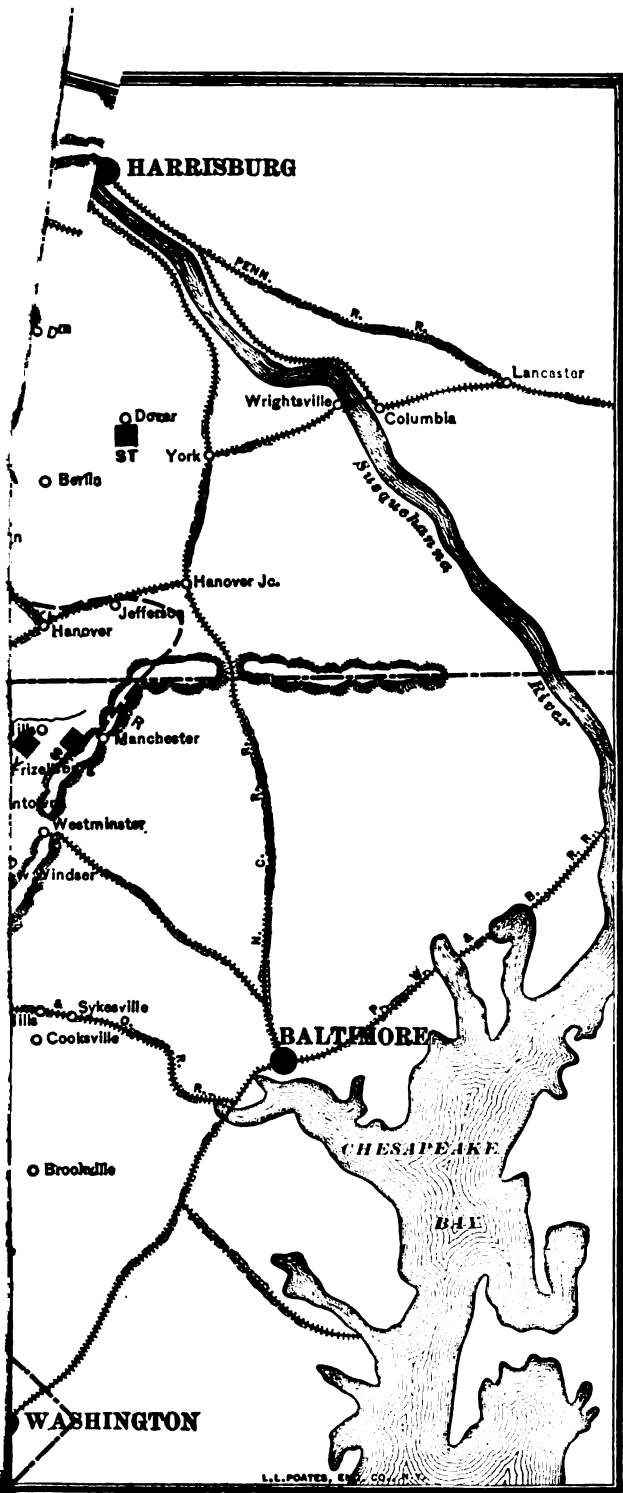


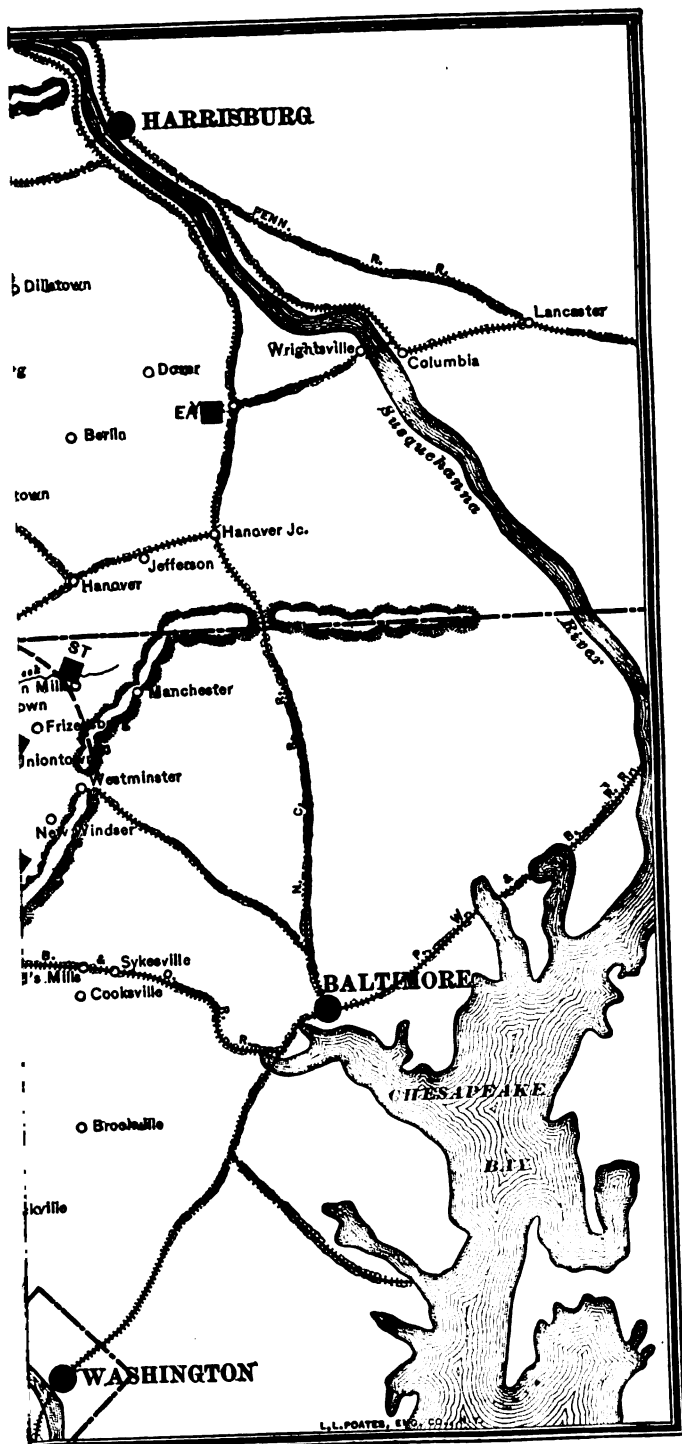


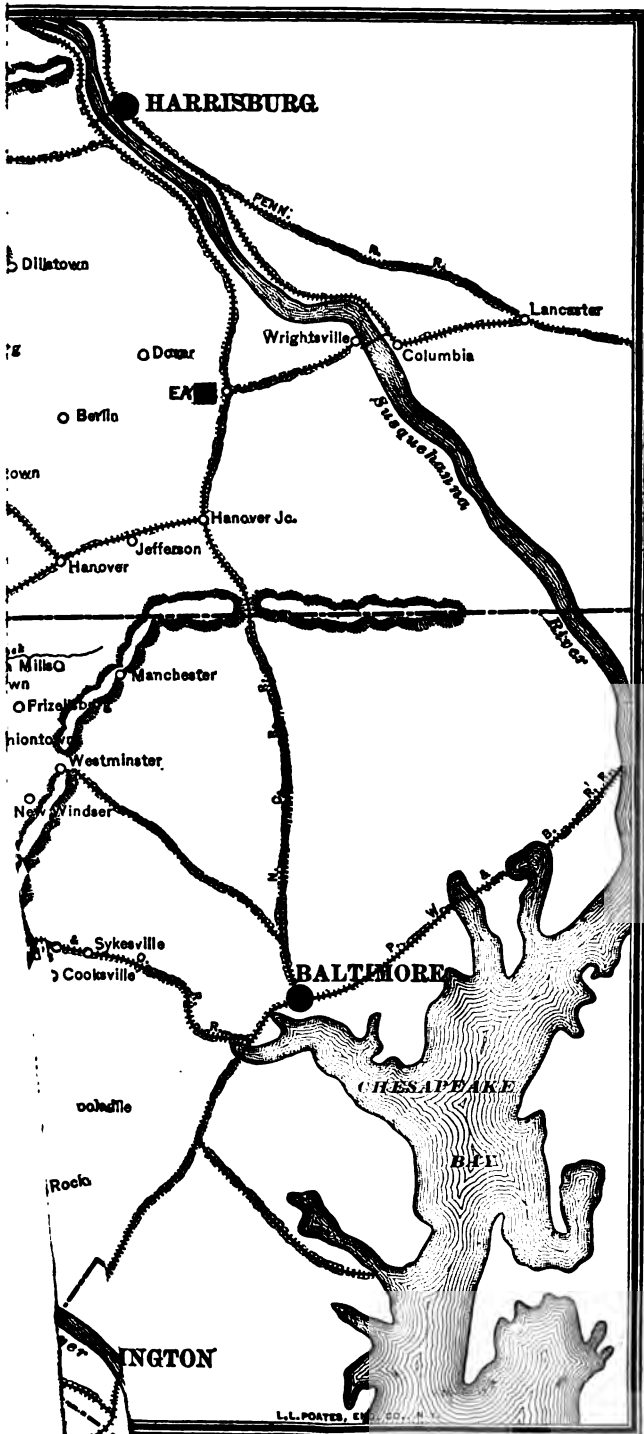




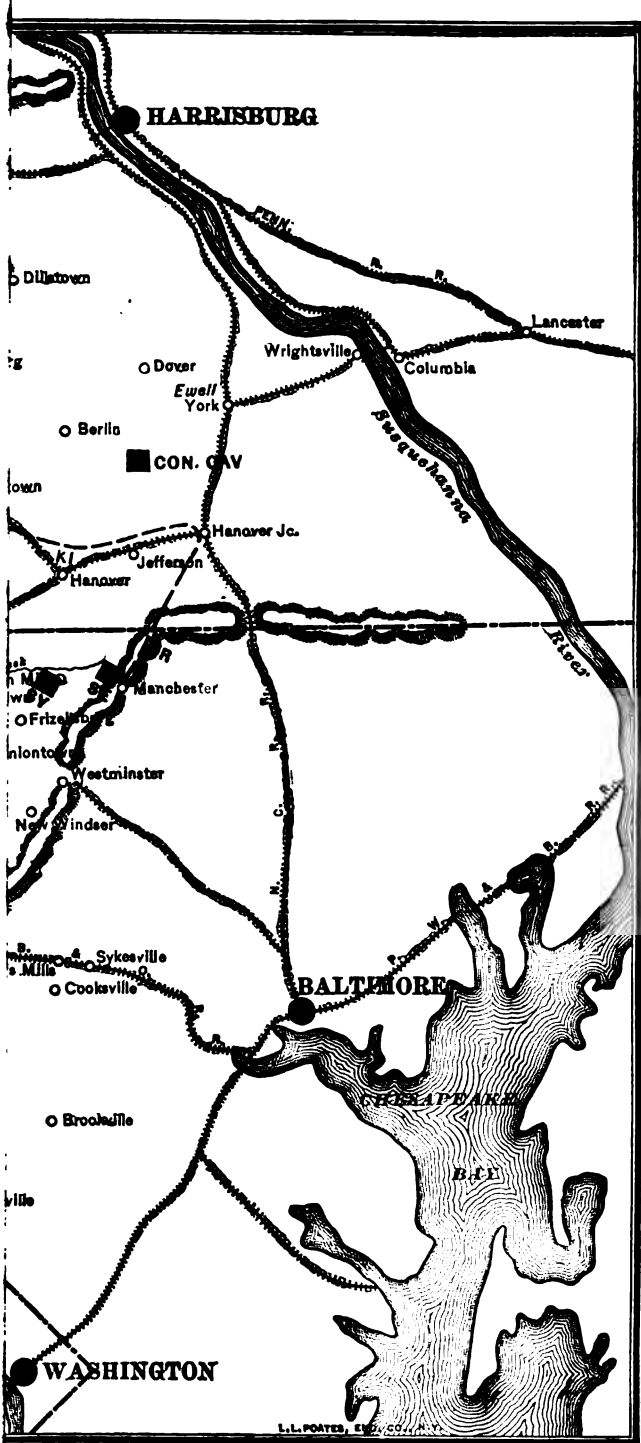


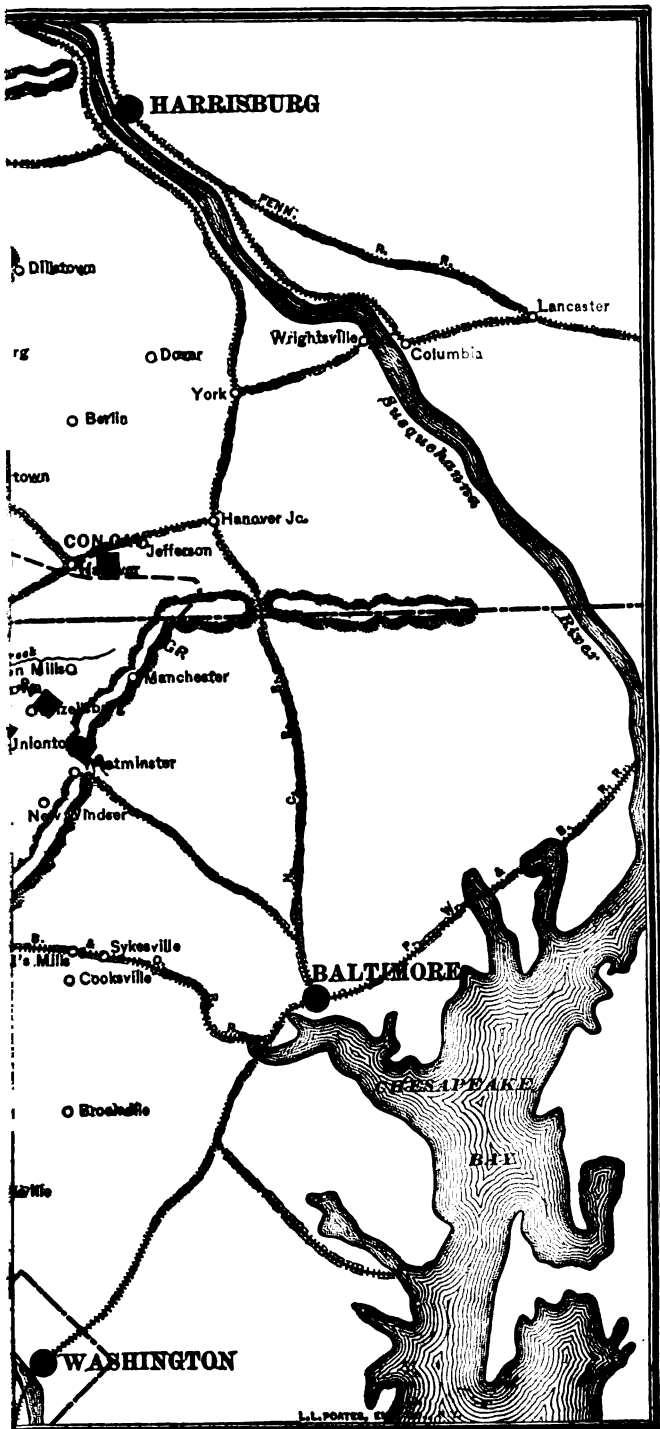


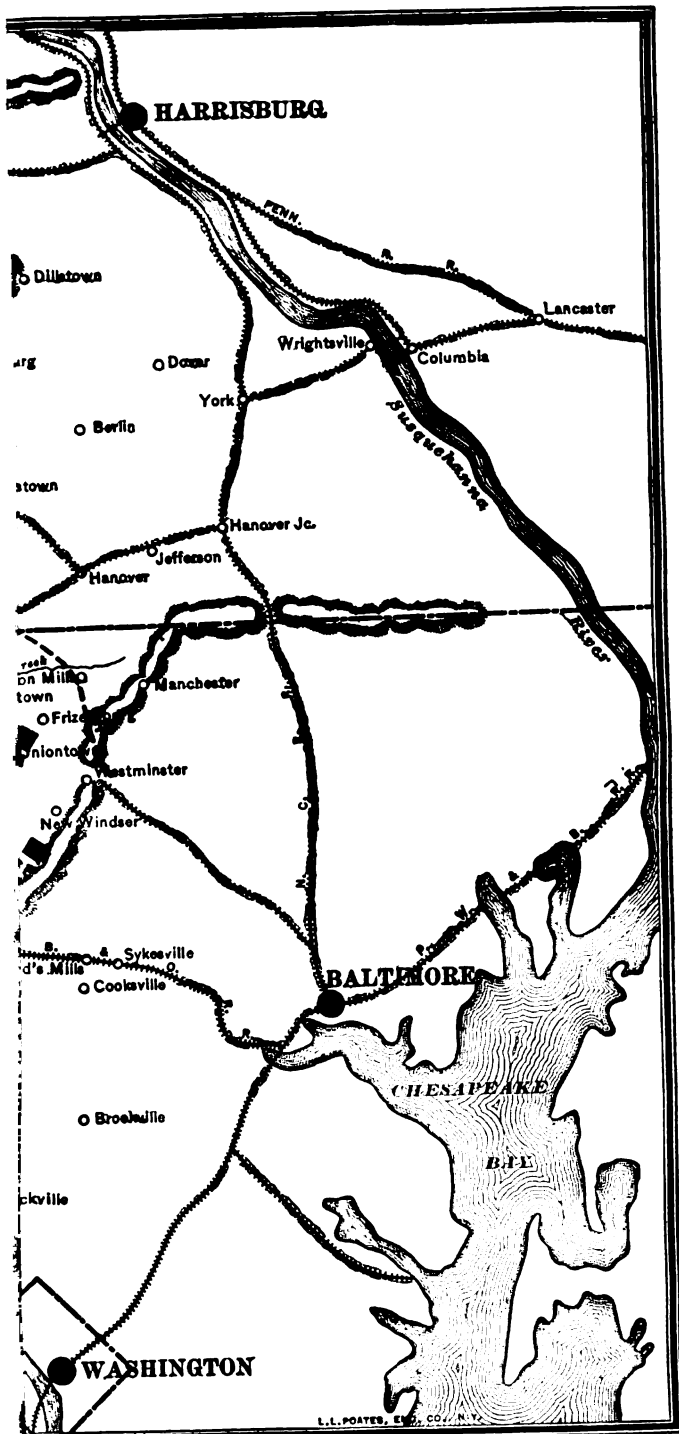


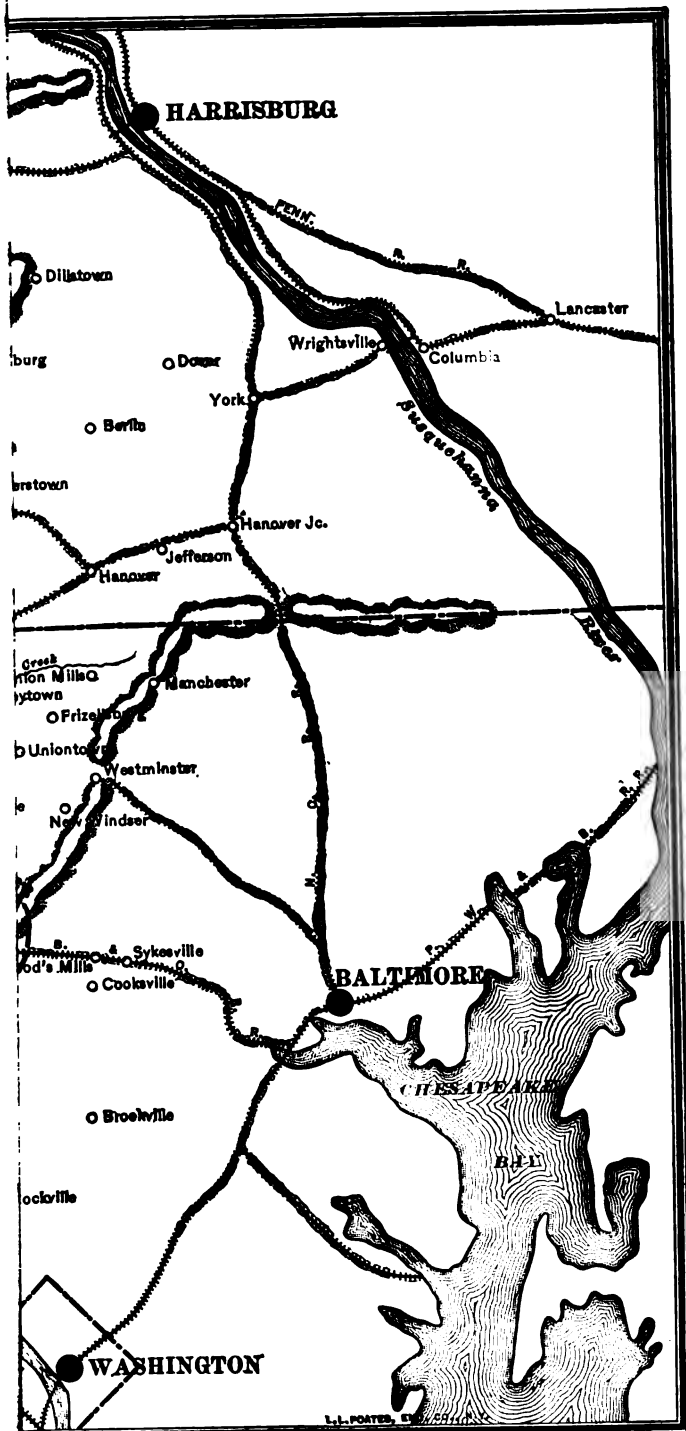


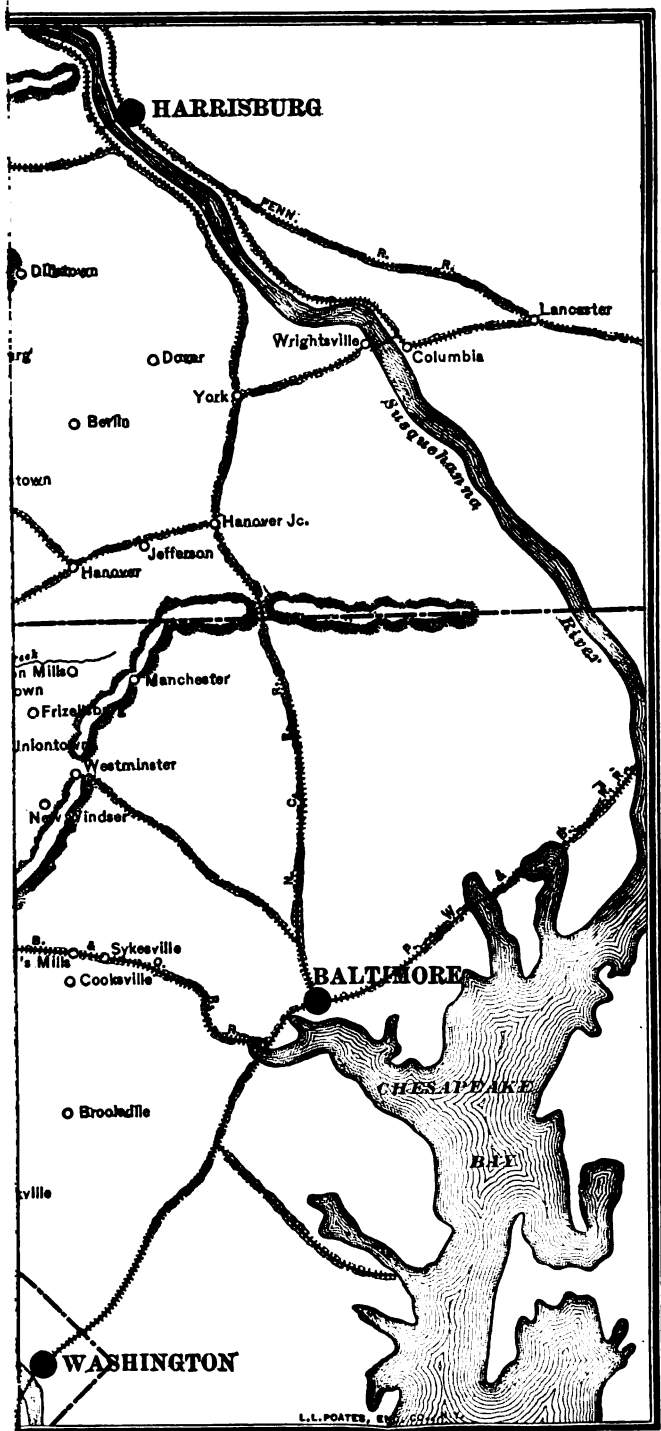














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